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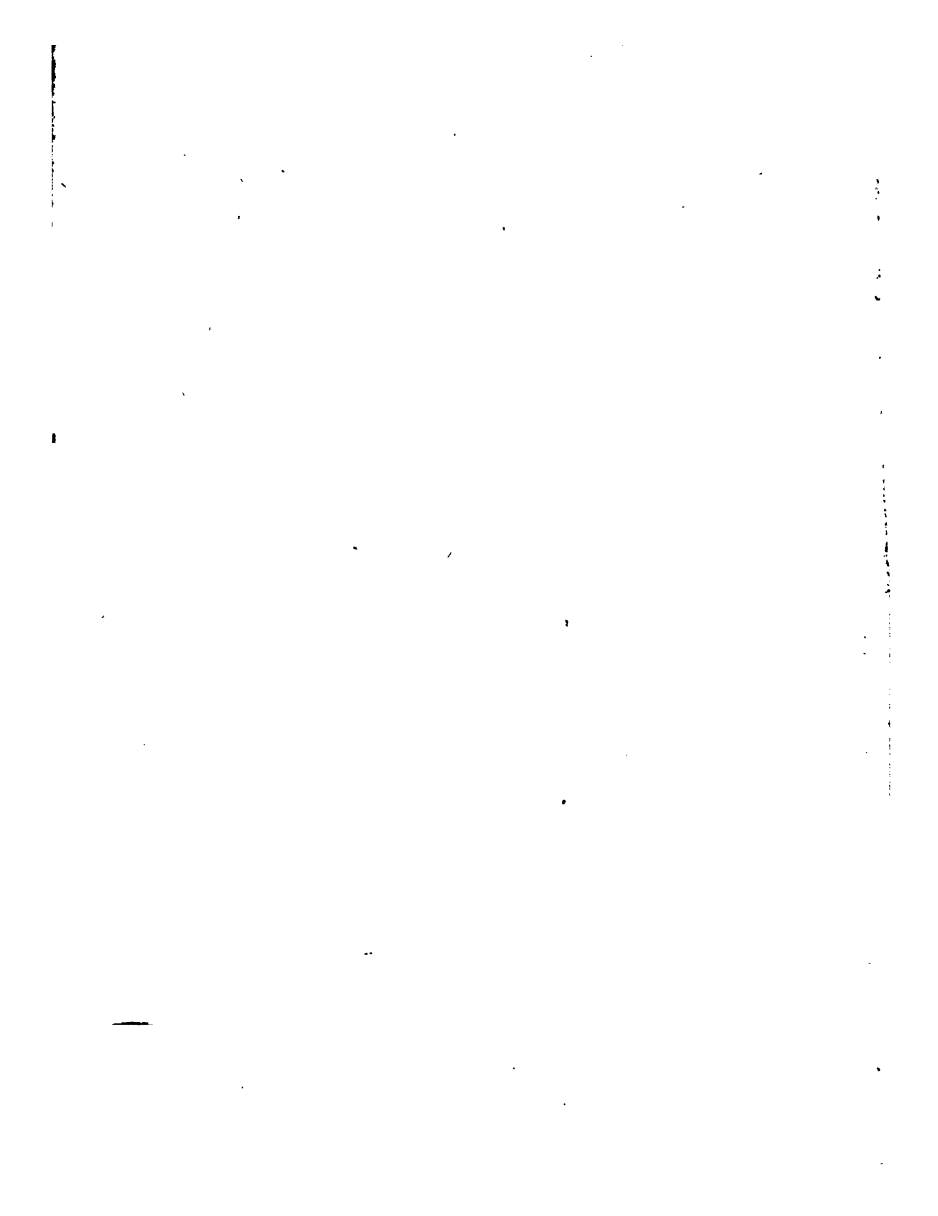
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Higgins



WHEN THE BIRDS GO  
NORTH AGAIN

•The  Co. •

1898

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# WHEN THE BIRDS GO NORTH AGAIN

BY

ELLA HIGGINSON

Author of "A Forest Orchid and Other Stories," and "From  
the Land of the Snow-Pearls"

7  
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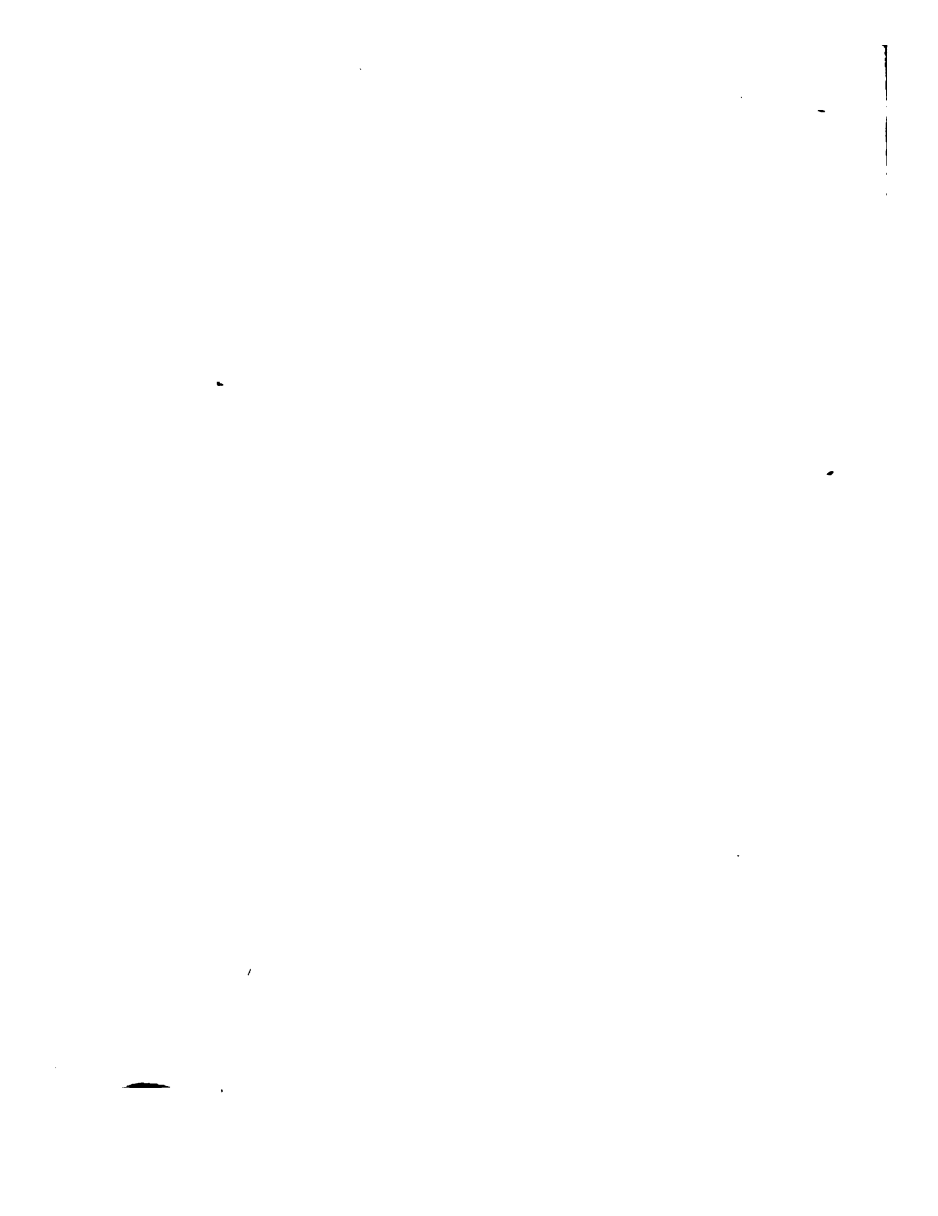
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To My Sister

CARRIE BLAKE MORGAN

31 X 653



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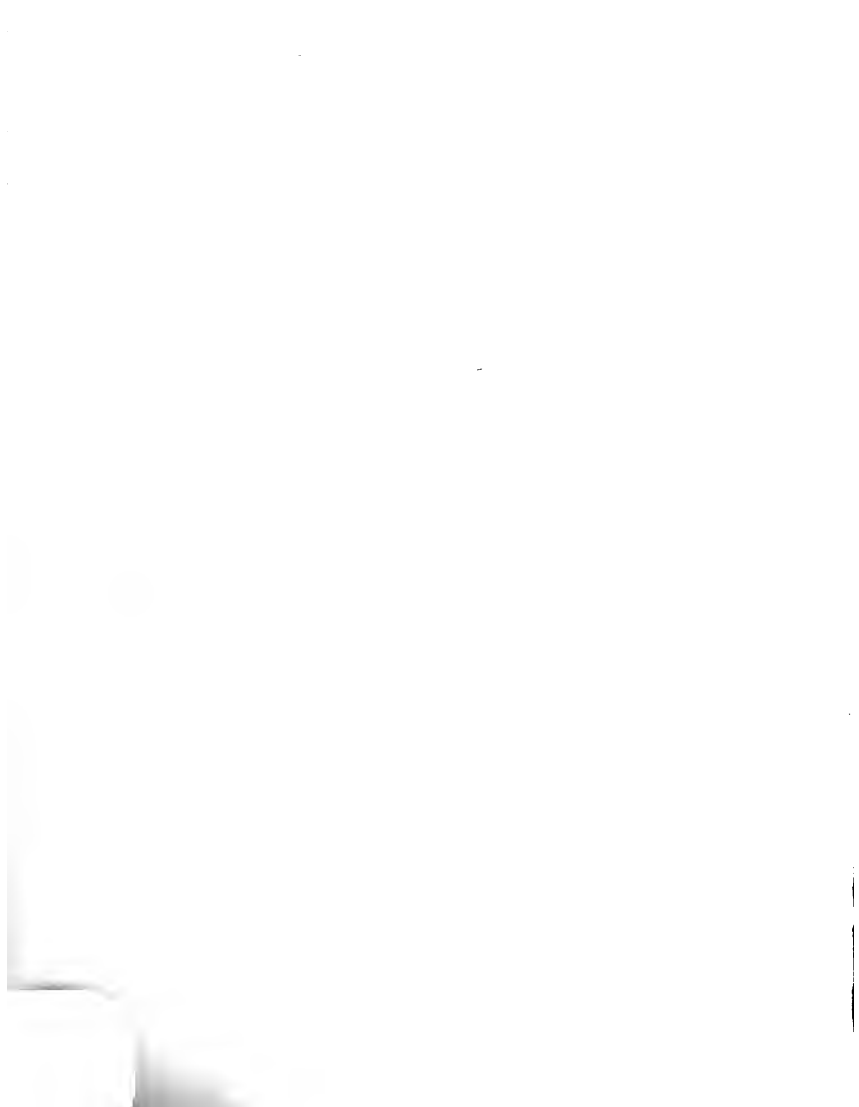
## WHEN THE BIRDS GO NORTH AGAIN

*Oh, every year bath its winter,  
And every year bath its rain —  
But a day is always coming  
When the birds go North again.*

*When new leaves swell in the forest,  
And grass springs green on the plain,  
And the alder's veins turn crimson —  
And the birds go North again.*

*Oh, every heart bath its sorrow,  
And every heart bath its pain —  
But a day is always coming  
When the birds go North again.*

*'Tis the sweetest thing to remember  
If courage be on the wane,  
When the cold dark days are over —  
Why, the birds go North again.*



## GOD'S CREED

**F**ORGIVE me that I hear thy creeds  
Unawed and unafraid;  
They are too small for one whose ears  
Have heard God's organ played;  
Who in wide, noble solitudes,  
In simple faith has prayed.

Forgive me that I cannot kneel  
And worship in this pew,  
For I have knelt in western dawns,  
When the stars were large and few,  
And the only fonts God gave me were  
The deep leaves filled with dew.

## GOD'S CREED

And so it is I worship best  
With only the soft air  
About me, and the sun's warm gold  
Upon my brow and hair ;  
For then my very heart and soul  
Mount upward in swift prayer.

My church has been a yellow space  
Ceiled over with blue heaven,  
My pew upon a noble hill  
Where the fir-trees were seven,  
And the stars upon their slender tops  
Were tapers lit at even.

My knees have known no cushions rich,  
But the soft, emerald sod ;  
My aisles have been the forest paths  
Lined with the crimson-rod ;  
My choir, the birds and winds and waves —  
My only pastor, God.

My steeple has been the dome of snow  
From the blue land that swells ;  
My rosary the acorns small  
That drop from bronzed cells ;  
And the only bells that summoned me  
Were the rhododendron bells.

At Easter, God's own hand adorned  
These dim, sweet, sacred bowers  
With the twin-blossom's delicate vine  
And all the West's rich flowers ;  
And lest they droop in mellow nights,  
He cooled them with light showers.

The crimson salmon-berry bells  
And wild violets were here,  
And those white, silent stars that shine  
Thro' purple glooms so clear ;  
And the pure lilies that are meet  
For a young virgin's bier.

Wild-currant blossoms broke and bled,  
Even as Mary's heart ;  
The gold musk in the marshy spots  
Curled tempting lips apart ;  
And I saw the feathery lupine, too,  
Up from the warm earth start.

The clover blossoms, pink and white,  
Rimmed round the silver mere ;  
The thrifty dandelion lit  
Her dawn-lamps far and near ;  
There was one white bloom that thro' the dusk  
Shone liquid, like a tear.

I watched the dawn come up the East,  
Lilied and chaste and still ;  
I felt my heart beat wild and strong,  
My veins with white fire thrill ;  
For it was the Easter dawn — and Christ  
Was with me on the hill !

Oh, every little feathered throat  
Swelled full with lyric song,  
And the ocean played along the shore,  
Full, passionate and strong —  
An organ grand whose each wave-note  
Was sounded sweet and long.

And so it is I worship best  
With only the soft air  
About me, and the sun's warm gold  
Upon my brow and hair;  
For then my very heart and soul  
Mount upward in swift prayer.

Forgive me that I hear thy creeds  
Unawed and unafraid;  
They are too small for one whose ears  
Have heard God's organ played;  
Who in vast, noble solitudes  
In simple faith has prayed.

## FOUR-LEAF CLOVER



**KNOW** a place where the sun is like gold,  
And the cherry blooms burst with snow,  
And down underneath is the loveliest nook,  
Where the four-leaf clovers grow.

One leaf is for hope, and one is for faith,  
And one is for love, you know,  
And God put another in for luck—  
If you search, you will find where they grow.

But you must have hope, and you must have faith,  
You must love and be strong — and so —  
If you work, if you wait, you will find the place  
Where the four-leaf clovers grow.



## BEGGARS



HILD with the hungry eyes,  
The pallid mouth and brow,  
And the lifted, asking hands,  
I am more starved than thou.

I beg not on the street ;  
But where the sinner stands,  
In secret place, I beg  
Of God, with outstretched hands.

As thou hast asked of me,  
Raising thy downcast head,  
So have I asked of Him,  
So, trembling, have I plead.

Take this and go thy way ;  
Thy hunger shall soon cease.  
Thou prayest but for bread,  
And I, alas ! for peace.

## THE MEADOW-LARK

**W**HEN the first September rain  
Has gone sparkling down my pane,  
And the blue has come again,  
And with pearls each leaf is shaking,  
Then a soft voice rises near,  
Oh, so mournfully and clear  
That the tears spring as I hear —

*“ Sweet — oh — Sweet — my heart is breaking ! ”*

Gone the white mock-orange sprays,  
Gone the clover-scented ways,  
Gone the dear, delicious days,  
And the earth sad tones is taking ;  
But who could the spring forget  
While that soft voice rises, set  
Deep in passion and regret —

*“ Sweet — oh — Sweet — my heart is breaking ! ”*

Was it only yester year  
That I stood and listened here,  
Without heartache, without tear,  
    For a burst of joy mistaking  
Those full lyric notes of pain  
Mounting yet and yet again  
From the meadows wet with rain —  
    “ Sweet — oh — Sweet — my heart is breaking ! ”

I know better, lark, to-day,  
I have walked with sorrow — yea,  
I know all that thou would'st say,  
    And my heart with tears is aching,  
When across the fading year  
Thou goest calling far and near,  
Oh, so mournfully and clear —  
    “ Sweet — oh — Sweet — my heart is breaking ! ”

## A PRAYER



ORD God, Thou lettest the green things  
start

A new life every year ;  
Out of their sunken selves they rise,  
Erect and sweet and clear.  
Behold the lily's pure, white leaves  
Unfolding by each mere !

Again the sap mounts in the fir  
Thro' every swelling vein ;  
Again the clover stirs and thrills,  
Responsive to the rain ;  
Again the tender grass makes green  
The lone breast of the plain.

Hear the new, golden flood of song  
The lark pours to the blue!  
Behold the strong, undaunted shoot  
Pushing its brave front through  
The fallen tree. . . . Lord God, Lord God,  
Let me begin anew!

Out of my own self let me rise!  
For, God, if it can be  
A new and noble growth may spring  
From yon decaying tree—  
Surely a strong, pure life may mount  
Out of this life of me.

## WE TWO IN ARCADIE

**W**E two have been to Arcadie —  
But it was long ago ;  
The wild syringa blossomed there,  
Gold hearts set sweet in snow,  
And crimson salmon-berry bells —  
Ah, me, so long ago !

We two went into Arcadie  
Without one backward glance ;  
Deep thro' the brown breast of the earth  
The sun had sent his lance,  
And every flower straightway sprung  
Up from her long, sweet trance.

We two alone in Arcadie !  
The road thro' forests ran,  
A silver ribbon ; and we heard  
The mellow pipes o' Pan,  
And followed as he fled thro' lights  
Of green and gold and tan.

WE TWO IN ARCADIE

15

We two went on thro' Arcadie  
In joy too deep for words ;  
The little clouds were tangled in  
The trees like beaten curds.  
We heard the stammering speech of rills  
And the passion-calls of birds.

Ah, me, from pleasant Arcadie  
We two came out — alas !  
No more to lie beneath the trees  
In the pale-green velvet grass —  
To listen to the pipes o' Pan  
And hear his footsteps pass !

Still, still, I know in Arcadie  
The blossoms fall like snow  
On happy lovers — as they fell  
On us so long ago !  
But, oh, my love, thro' Arcadie  
No more shall we two go !

## DREAM-TIME



It is the time when crimson stars  
    Weary of heaven's cold delight,  
And take, like petals from a rose,  
    Their soft and hesitating flight  
Upon the cool wings of the air  
    Across the purple night.

It is the time when silver sails  
    Go drifting down the violet sea,  
And every poppy's crimson mouth  
    Kisses to sleep a lovesick bee ;  
The fireweed waves her rosy plumes  
    On pasture, hill and lea.

It is the time to dream — and feel  
    The languid rocking of a boat,  
The pushing ripple round the keel  
    Where cool, deep-hearted lilies float,  
And hear thro' wild syringas steal  
    Some songster's drowsy note.



DREAM-TIME

17

It is the time, at eve, to lie  
And in a hammock faintly sway,  
To watch the golds and crimsons die  
Across the blue stretch of the bay;  
To hear the sweet dusk tiptoe by  
In the footsteps of the day.

•

## SERENADE

HE SINGS



WAKE, my Lady Sweetlips,  
The moon draws to the sea,  
The dew draws to the clover bloom —  
And I to thee.

The sea will waken to the moon,  
The clover to the bee —  
Awake, my Lady Sweetlips,  
Awake to me.

Awake, my Lady Sweetlips,  
The nightingale has ceased,  
The pale, pale petals of the dawn  
Drift up the East ;  
My heart aches with the ravishment  
Of love's sweet ecstasy —  
Awake, my Lady Sweetlips,  
Awake to me.

## SERENADE

19

Arise, my Lady Sweetlips,  
The soft hours tremble by,  
Too soon the red rose of the dawn  
Burns in the sky ;  
The lark arises to the dawn,  
Singing, from off the lea —  
Arise, my Lady Sweetlips,  
Arise to me.

## THE NOVICES OF HEAVEN

**B**EHOLD how God has sown the stars,  
In the blue fields of the sky ;  
When purple dusk comes stilly on,  
How soft and thick they lie  
Within the lower deeps — the earth  
To crown and beautify !

On nights like this the angels steal  
Out of the jewelled gate,  
Upon the porches wrought of pearl,  
And look and lean and wait,  
With tender eyes turned down to earth,  
Till the hour grows sweet and late.

With soft arms lightly pressed upon  
The outer balustrade,  
Whose every rail and baluster  
Of fire-opal is made,  
Their misty shadows wavering  
On the amethyst arcade,

They lean and look in silence there,  
Above the spirit sea  
Up which the souls must rise from earth,  
When God shall set them free ;  
They watch the silver hours go by,  
And wait so patiently !

These are the novices of heaven,  
Whose eyes still earthward turn ;  
Whose souls, unused to higher life,  
Still ever earthward yearn ;  
Whose hearts, unable to forget,  
Still for the earth-hearts burn.

And so on nights like this they steal  
While the older angels sleep,  
Out to the opal balustrade,  
And longing vigils keep ;  
And when the lights go out on earth  
They bow their heads and weep.

## EASTER DAWN

**E**NTER, sun, this silent world !  
Let thy colors shake unfurled,  
Down these pale green miles of sky,  
On this pale green sea to lie.  
Not a murmur breaks the still  
Of the forest on yon hill ;  
Scarce a ripple round my prow  
As the sea I softly plow.  
Here the jellyfish has spread  
His umbrella o'er his head.  
And the olive kelp things pass  
Noiselessly, on liquid glass.  
In the distance, sweet and dim,  
All the enchanted islands swim,  
And the large, white morning-star  
Watches o'er the western bar.

Lean aside, ye domes of snow,  
Let the proud sun enter slow,  
As befits a royal king!  
Now, behold, how everything  
Of a sudden springs to life —  
With keen passion swiftly rife!  
How the ripples laugh and speak,  
Sliding lengthwise, cheek to cheek;  
How the radiant colors run  
Up before the mounting sun;  
How is tipped with crimson fire  
Every slender forest spire;  
How the gray rocks, creased and worn,  
By the tides of centuries torn,  
Lift their barren breasts and turn  
Dumbly to the light, and burn;  
How the islands flame like brass  
On a floor of tinted glass,  
And the frozen mountains speak  
With blazing signals, peak to peak.  
Now the small waves shine and sing  
As round my prow they lip and cling;

## EASTER DAWN

By a faint scent wandereth  
Sweeter than a woman's breath,  
And a flush burns in the South  
Warmer than a woman's mouth.  
Every bird on yonder hill  
With his full notes breaks the still —  
God's inspired chorus! Hark!  
Robin, thrush, song-sparrow, lark.

Lo, it is the Easter dawn!  
Lo, it is the holy dawn!


In no church with incense sweet  
May I hope my Lord to meet —  
Where the finest choirs are sought,  
And the richest pews are bought;  
Where the longing ones are dumb,  
And the ragged must not come;  
Where the sinful and the worn,  
And the woman passion-torn —  
Hollow-eyed and liped with gray —  
See the rich skirts drawn away



By a hand immaculate,  
Lest one touch contaminate.  
Rather, let me steal apart,  
With a full and trembling heart,  
Where dumb things unite in praise  
Of this holy day of days,  
And in places pure as this  
Kneel, His tortured feet to kiss.  
Not one broken, dying flower  
Do I offer in this hour,  
But my lifted, shaking hands  
Bear offerings He understands;  
And I feel His palm in mine,  
And I drink His breath like wine.

O, my soul, mount high and sing!  
O, my soul, mount high and sing!

## THE WAY THOU SINGEST

H, I have heard a meadow-lark  
Sing o'er the growing corn  
In notes of passion and desire,  
At early primrose morn —  
So full and rich and sweet,  
My heart with rapture beat,  
And for remembered years  
Up sprang the tears. . . .  
And here — and now —  
So singest thou !

And I have heard — and seen — the notes  
Of a brief summer rain  
Burst into sudden, lyric gold  
Upon my window-pane —

## THE WAY THOU SINGEST

27

When the sunset's lucent flame  
For one sweet instant came —  
    Born of the rain's desire  
    And the sunset's fire. . . .  
And here — and now —  
So singest thou !

I dreamed I heard an angel sing  
    With rapt and lifted eyes ;  
With marvel in his voice and look  
    And in his heart surprise  
That the angels leaned from sleep  
To hear and bow and weep,  
    Thinking of ones loved so  
    On earth below. . . .  
And here — and now —  
So singest thou !

## THE LONG AGO



BUT in the woods where the air is sweet,  
And the fragrant, wild things blow,  
Dwelt you and I from the world apart  
In the beautiful long ago.

Do you remember the pale pink flower  
That grew by the wayside there?  
Oh, every leaf was a leaf of gold,  
And the commonest weed was rare!

There were snow-white tents in the alder grove,  
Where the gypsies slept at night —  
And oh, but each hour was an hour of love,  
Set with moments of delight!

The ceiling that trembled above our heads —  
Was it only the sky's deep blue ?  
The jewels that hung on the lily's stem —  
Were they only drops of dew ?

And the song that went to the gates of God  
Thro' the dawn's first emerald hush —  
Was it sung by a seraph lost from heaven,  
Or a golden-noted thrush ?

Oh, love, my love, there was never a couch  
So soft as that velvet sod !  
And every song was a seraph's song —  
For the soul of our love was God.

And oh, for the woods where the air is sweet,  
And the fragrant, wild things blow —  
Where we two loved as the angels love,  
In the beautiful long ago.

## I COULD NOT BE A NUN



COULD not be a nun,  
For I should kneel and say  
A prayer for every bead  
A dozen times a day —  
And all the while my thoughts  
Would wander thy dear way.

I could not be a nun,  
And push my warm brown hair  
Under a heavy veil,  
And smooth and hide it there —  
For I should smile, and think,  
“He praised it as most fair.”

I COULD NOT BE A NUN

31

How could I be a nun ?  
How could I ever still  
The sudden throb, or stay  
The thought of thee at will,  
Or check the quick response  
To love's remembered thrill ?

I could not be a nun,  
I never could confess  
My sins, and not say — “ Lord,  
I love him more, not less ;  
Give me a thousand years  
Of pain for one caress ! ”

I could not be a nun —  
Dearest, thou knowest this !  
For deep my cheek would burn  
At thought of one long kiss ;  
Or I should bow and weep  
One unforgotten bliss.

## I COULD NOT BE A NUN

I could not be a nun !

For how, I ask, at night  
Could I lie still and sleep

Within my chamber white,  
Nor reach my arms and yearn  
For one dear lost delight ?

Nay. In the first sweet dream

I should run straight to thee,  
And draw thee — my arms so —

Close, closer, love, to me. . . .  
And till the morning bell  
We would kiss silently.



## EVE



LOSE to the gates of Paradise I flee ;  
The night is hot and serpents leave their  
beds,  
And slide along the dark, crooking their  
heads,—  
My God, my God, open the gates to me !

My eyes are burning so I cannot see ;  
My feet are bleeding and I suffer pain ;  
Let me come in on the cool grass again—  
My God, my God, open the gates to me !

I ate the fruit of the forbidden tree,  
And was cast out into the barren drouth ;  
And since—the awful taste within my mouth !  
My God, my God, open the gates to me !

Am I shut out for all eternity ?

I do repent me of my one black sin,

With prayers and tears of blood. . . . Let me  
come in !

My God, my God, open the gates to me !

Let me come in where birds and flowers be ;

Let me once more lie naked in the grass

That trembles when the long wind-ripples pass !

Lord God, Lord God, open the gates to me !

## WEARING OUT LOVE

**F**ORGIVE you? . . . Oh, of course,  
dear,  
A dozen times a week!  
We women were created  
Forgiveness but to speak.

You'd die before you'd hurt me  
Intentionally? . . . True.  
But it is not, O dearest,  
The thing you mean to do—

It's what you do, unthinking,  
That makes the quick tear start;  
The tear may be forgotten—  
But the hurt stays in the heart.

## WEARING OUT LOVE

And tho' I may forgive you  
A dozen times a day,  
Yet each forgiveness wears, dear,  
A little love away.

As the impatient river  
Wears out the patient sand,  
Or as the fickle ocean  
Wears out the faithful land.

And one day you'll be grieving,  
And chiding me, no doubt,  
Because so much forgiving  
Has worn a great love out.

## THE RHODODENDRON BELLS



CROSS the warm night's subtle dusk,  
Where linger yet the purple light  
And perfume of the wild, sweet musk, —  
So softly glowing, softly bright,  
Tremble the rhododendron bells,  
The rose-pink rhododendron bells.

Tall, slender trees of evergreen  
That know the winds of Puget Sea,  
And narrow leaves of satin's sheen,  
And clusters of sweet mystery —  
Mysterious rhododendron bells,  
Rare, crimson rhododendron bells.

O hearken — hush! And lean thy ear,  
Tuned for an elfin melody,  
And tell me now, dost thou not hear  
Those voices of pink mystery? —  
Voices of silver-throated bells,  
Of breathing, rhododendron bells.

## IF I SHOULD DIE



I should die — then would the old love  
spring  
Up from the fallow wastes within thy  
heart;  
Straight would the flower from the old roots  
start —  
But oh! what deathless thorns would ache and sting.

If I should die — but nay! If I should live  
And stumble on my way with bleeding feet —  
Dearest, might not the old flow'r, newly sweet,  
Rise from the weed-choked past — if I should live?

## REAPING



WHY is it I forget the good  
You brought me in the past,  
And dwell upon the tireless grief  
You wrought me at the last ?

Why is it I forget how kind  
And true you were for years,  
And only think how at the last  
You gave me shame and tears ?

Why is it I forget the fault  
Was mine — my very own,  
And murmur in my sleepless grief  
That it was yours alone ?

This is my punishment. Love's rose  
Has fallen by the way ;  
But on its thorn, that still remains,  
My heart bleeds night and day.

## THE TIDE IS LOW



HE tide is low, is low,  
And the shining waves run out,  
And along the pebbled beach  
The children play and shout.

To-night these waves will come  
Speaking along the shore, —  
But the voice that is in my heart  
I shall hear no more, no more.

To-night these waves will come,  
Beating with life from the main, —  
But the heart of my very heart  
Will never beat again.




## MOONRISE IN THE ROCKIES



THE trembling train clings to the leaning wall  
Of solid stone ; a thousand feet below  
Sinks a black gulf ; the sky hangs like a pall  
Upon the peaks of everlasting snow.

Then of a sudden springs a rim of light,  
Curved like a silver sickle. High and higher —  
Till the full moon burns on the breast of night  
And a million firs stand tipped with lucent fire.

## HATE

 F hate be unforgivable,  
Then must I unforgiven be,  
For I shall hate one woman, Lord,  
For all eternity.

Forgiven or not, I hate her so  
That did she, burnt with fever, lie,  
I'd spill the ice-cup that she craved  
And laugh to see her die.

Yea, Lord, yea, Lord — I hate her so  
That, were she sent to deepest hell,  
I'd pray the awful fires might do  
Their part slow — slow — and well.

## APRIL



H, who is this with twinkling feet,  
With glad, young eyes and laughter sweet,  
Who tosses back her strong, wild hair,  
And saucy kisses flings to Care,  
The while she laughs at her? Beware—  
You who this winsome maiden meet!

She dances on a daisied throne,  
About her waist a slender zone  
Of dandelion's gold; her eyes  
Are softer than the summer skies,  
And blue as violets; and lies  
A tearful laughter in her tone.

She reaches dimpled arms and bare;  
Her breath is sweet as wild-rose air;  
She sighs, she smiles, she glances down,  
Her brows meet in a sudden frown;  
She laughs; then tears the violets drown—  
If you should meet her — ah, beware!

## TWO DAYS



CROSSED a daisied field; the skies were  
fair,

The lusty trees stretched green arms over-  
head;

The sun shook gold dust thro' the April air,  
And a glad brook leaped down its pebbled bed.

The meadow-lark flung out such liquid notes,  
My happy soul stood still and leaned to hear;  
The wild canaries fluffed their yellow coats,  
And turned their restless heads in jealous fear.

And, oh, my heart was glad, for it was spring!  
Blue, blue the dappled skies that swung above!  
But still more glad my soul, remembering  
The world was sweet to me because of love.

\* \* \* \* \*

I crossed a lonely field; the skies were gray,  
The winds crept from the sea with sullen moans;  
Ice-locked, ice-bound, the brook grieved night and day  
Above the hollow sound of falling cones.

With drumming wings the mottled pheasant flew,  
The ghostly trees reached barren arms across;  
And, oh, my heart was sad — so well I knew  
The winter world was dull because of loss.

## LOVE-SONG



HE green is on the grass again,  
And the blue is on the sea,  
And every lark is singing to  
His mate in ecstasy ;  
And oh, my love, and oh, my love,  
I sing to thee !

Wild Mary-buds are opening  
Within the marshy lea,  
And quickened saps are pulsing thro'  
The heart of every tree ;  
And ah, how thy love wakes and thrills  
The heart of me !

The green is on the grass again,  
And the blue is on the sea,  
And every bird is longing for  
The nesting-time ; the bee  
Is longing for the clover-bloom,  
And I for thee !

## I THANK THEE, GOD

**F**OR my small corner of the world —  
Blue sea, blue sky and pale green sod,  
And noble mountains glistening mistily —  
I thank Thee, God!

For deeps where white syringa droops,  
And dogwood-blossoms shyly nod,  
And the wild currant swings her crimson lamps —  
I thank Thee, God!

For the sweet clover at my door,  
Set all day long with golden bees ;  
The dewdrops linked along a blade of grass,  
The bending trees ;

The slender vine about my porch,  
The meadow-lark at dawn that sings —  
I thank Thee, God, that I have purest joy  
In simple things !

## THE DEAD

**R**AIN and wind on the roof,  
And the ocean beating the shore,  
And now and again a shaking of window-  
panes  
And a rattling of the door.

Shadows upon the wall,  
Wavering shadows and gray ;  
Lonely, heartsick, I reach my hand in the dark  
For the hand that has gone away.

The dead — do they turn in their graves  
On a wind-bared night like this,  
And stretch their arms and yearn for the light of the  
hearth,  
And the passionate warmth of a kiss ?



## JUNE NIGHT



HE sunset burns along the hill,  
And all the stars come out too soon,  
And lovely, restless Venus lies  
In the curled arm of the moon.

Venus, thou art a light-o'-love!  
Now by the ardent moon caressed,  
Midnight shall find thee trembling down  
To the sea's strong, throbbing breast.

## WHEN I AM DEAD

**W**HEN I am dead  
Bring roses red,  
And poppies — blooms of rest —  
And heap them on my breast,  
That I may breathe their perfume deep —  
And sleep and sleep and sleep !  
    No flowers white,  
    For chill delight,  
Give me on that glad day,  
But bend and smile and say :  
    “ Bring blooms that burn and light and glow —  
    She loved all warmth and color so ! ”  
And all about me to my feet  
Drop clovers pink and sweet.  
Why should you lay those cold, white things  
On the heart where lies with folded wings  
    The cold, dead bird of song ?  
    Dearest, the last night is so long —  
I pray you pile the poppies deep  
Upon my breast — that I may sleep !

When I am dead  
Let the sun's red  
Strike thro' uncurtained pane  
From off the singing main ;  
    Yea, everything must sing that day  
    When I go on my glad new way,  
And if there should be any tears —  
Let them be for my wasted years,  
And not for me. Throw all the windows wide  
And let the strong surge of the tide  
    Come sounding once more up the hill —  
    And I shall hear it still !  
And each home-coming wave shall say :  
" Be glad, be very glad, to-day " —  
And for the last time I shall hear !  
But after that I would not hear,  
For sweet as thought of hearing seems,  
Who hears must dream — and I would have no  
    dreams !  
So pile the crimson poppies deep —  
For a long dreamless sleep.

## THE POPPY LAND




POPPY sea, and a poppy sky,  
And a blur of blue between,  
And all around the swelling hills  
Of new and delicate green.

Then oh, how sweet, when the dusk comes on,  
And the beach fires brightly burn,  
And the flaming trees up the Lummi way  
To tall red torches turn ;

When in the wood the glow-worms shine,  
Like little stars of light,  
And one by one, all silently,  
The hours swim down the night —

Then oh ! how sweet is the wind that blows,  
Softly and languorously,  
From the poppy seas and the poppy skies  
In the land of Used-To-Be.

CRADLE-SONG OF THE FISHER-  
MAN'S WIFE

 WUNG in the hollows of the deep,  
While silver stars their watches keep,  
Sleep, my seabird, sleep!  
Our boat the glistening fishes fill,  
Our prow turns homeward — hush, be still,  
Sleep, my seabird, sleep —  
Sleep, sleep.

The wind is springing from out the West,  
Nestle thee deeper in mother's breast,  
Rest, my seabird, rest!  
There is no sea our boat could whelm  
While thy brave father is at the helm,  
Rest, my seabird, rest —  
Rest, rest.

## CRADLE-SONG

The foam flies past us, the lightnings gleam,  
The waves break over, the fierce winds scream,

Dream, my seabird, dream !

Dream of the cot where high and low,  
Crimson and white, the roses blow,

Dream, my seabird, dream —

Dream, dream.

What tho' the tempest is on the deep ?  
Heaven will guard thee — do not weep,

Sleep, my seabird, sleep !

Be brave as a fisherman's child should be,  
Rocked in the hollows of the sea,

Sleep, my seabird, sleep —

Sleep, sleep.

## THE LADY OF HIGH DEGREE

**M**Y neighbor dwells in a lowly cot,  
No curtains at her windows sway,  
But one slim morning-glory vine  
Swings purple bells the livelong day ;  
And from the primrose dawn till dusk,  
I hear her tender notes outring,  
Oh ! bitterly I envy her, —  
I have too many tears to sing.

I dwell within a marble hall,  
And costly gems flash on my breast,  
But thro' all sumptuous ease I feel  
That simple cottage love is best ;  
I envy her those tireless feet,  
Those happy eyes so free from guile,  
I envy her those mirthful lips —  
I have too many tears to smile.

All thro' the golden afternoons  
She rocks her cradle to and fro  
Outside, where lazy breezes creep,  
And humble flowers sweetly blow;  
And ever as she sings and sews,  
The sunbeams in her bosom lurk,  
And thoughts of one make labor light—  
I have too many tears to work.

And in the lonely, sleepless nights,  
I almost see the starlit gloom,  
And feel the peace and calm content  
Of her low-ceiled and humble room;  
Her head lies on an honest breast,  
Whose love for her is true and deep,  
Ah! happy, happy, happy she!—  
I have too many tears to sleep.



## ADRIFT AND ANCHORED



OUR barques met, touching — and trembled  
and parted,  
Yours for the ocean and mine for the  
bay ;  
Ay, yours to drift from the hour that it started,  
Mine to be anchored by night and by day.

The storms arise, and the rain-clouds are flying  
Over my barque in the harbor at rest ;  
But my poor heart, when the sea-gulls are crying,  
Flees to you tossed on the tempest's mad breast.

And oft — ah, me ! — when the lightning is flashing,  
Cleaving a pathway of flame o'er the sea,  
When winds are wild, and the thunder is crashing  
Out where your barque rolls, while calm is with  
me,

I think I see, through the tears that are burning,  
    You, as we drift ever farther apart. . . .  
You reach your arms — with your lonely heart turn-  
    ing  
    Back to the deep-anchored peace of my heart.

## THE PASSING OF THE HOURS



THE hours steal by with still, unasking lips—  
So lightly that I cannot hear their tread;  
And softly touch me with their finger-tips  
To find if I be dreaming, or be dead.

And yet however still their flight may be,  
Their ceaseless going weights my heart with tears;  
These touches will have wrought deep scars on me—  
When the light hours have worn to heavy years.

## THE ROOM BY THE SEA



ROOM so full of sunlight,  
Of sound and scent of sea !  
No other room in all the world  
Could be so dear to me.

O room that looks to Southland —  
That looks to East and West !  
Thy four calm walls have held for me  
Life's truest, purest, best.

O room so full of flowers,  
Of sound of wind and sea !  
The fairest rooms in palaces  
Are poor compared to thee.

THE ROOM BY THE SEA

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And, room, when I have left thee,  
And other eyes peer in,  
Be true to me, nor ever speak  
Of dreams that dwelt herein.

For, room, I love thee fondly,  
And hold thee in my heart;  
But I have learned with all we love  
There comes a time to part.

## A THANK-OFFERING



ORD God, the winter has been sweet and  
brief  
In this fair land ;  
For us the budded willow and the leaf,  
The peaceful strand.

For us the silver nights and golden days,  
The violet mist ;  
The pearly clouds pierced with vibrating rays  
Of amethyst.

At evening, every wave of our blue sea  
Hollowed to hold  
A fragment of the sunset's mystery —  
A fleck of gold.

The crimson haze is on the alder trees  
In places lush ;  
Already sings with sweet and lyric ease  
The western thrush.

Lord God, for some of us the days and years  
Have bitter been ;  
For some of us the burden and the tears,  
The gnawing sin.

For some of us, O God, the scanty store,  
The failing bin ;  
For some of us the gray wolf at the door,  
The red, within !

But to the hungry Thou hast given meat,  
Hast clothed the cold ;  
And Thou hast given courage strong and sweet  
To the sad and old.

And so we thank Thee, Thou most tender God,  
For the leaf and flower ;  
For the tempered winds, and quickening, velvet sod,  
And the gracious shower.

Yea, generous God, we thank Thee for this land  
Where all are fed,  
Where at the doors no freezing beggars stand,  
Pleading for bread.

## HUMILITY

**F**ATHER — I have been humble here,  
So when I come to Thee,  
It will be meet that Thou should'st give  
Thy lowliest place to me.

Give me no rare and priceless garb,  
No crown with glittering gem,  
But let me sit and patiently  
Broider thy garment's hem.

I shall not envy her that sings  
At morn and eve until  
Her passion and her rapture make  
The very angels thrill.

I shall not envy her that sits  
Proudly at thy right side ;  
Give me the lowest, humblest place —  
I shall be satisfied.



I shall not envy even her  
    Upon whose crownéd hair  
Thou layest Thy tender, gracious hand,  
    And praisest, as most fair,

If once — once only — Thou wilt stoop  
    To me, as to a child,  
That ever after I may say :  
    “ He looked at me and smiled.”

✓

## DESPAIR

**A**STRIDE, like a man, on a dun-colored  
mare,  
Thro' the wan shadows that herald the  
night,  
Down the long valley comes riding Despair.

Sharply the hoof-beats wake up the dull air!  
Who would have guessed that I'd know her at  
sight —  
Astride, like a man, on a dun-colored mare!


Bent are her eyebrows beneath her black hair,  
Firm is her seat and her rein-touch is light —  
Down the long valley comes riding Despair.

Ah, she resembles her pale sister, Care —  
She who comes riding, defiant, to-night,  
Astride, like a man, on a dun-colored mare!

**With eyeballs gleaming and eyelids aflame,  
Nostrils distended and thin lips set tight,  
Down the long valley comes riding Despair.**

**(I have a good sword named Courage. I swear,  
Back to the wall I will stand up and fight!)  
Astride, like a man, on a dun-colored mare,  
Down the long valley comes riding Despair.**

## THE PETALED THORN

IN is a crimson rose  
Petaled upon a thorn,  
Whose beauty fairest glows  
In its first morn.

But soon (dost know how soon?)  
Its petals fall apart;  
And comes the high, hot noon  
To scorch its heart.

The bloom dies in a day;  
Yet petals, fair at morn,  
Leave as they fall away,  
One deathless thorn.

## THE SNOW MOUNTAIN



THOU Sphinx that sittest at the Opal Gate  
That lets the ocean in to Puget Sea,  
Keeping thy silent watch o'er time and  
fate,

Thro' clouds that veil thy grandeur mistily,  
Or with the sun's fierce halo on thy brow ;  
Furrowed by lava, rugged, stern and white,  
Thou wert a marvel to me once, but now,  
Majestic Sphinx ! I read thy secret right.

\* \* \* \* \*

God, let me be a mountain when I die,  
Stung by the hail, lashed by tormenting rains !  
Let lava fires surge, turbulent and high,  
With fiercest torture thro' my bursting veins ;  
Let lightnings flame around my lonely brow,  
And mighty storm-clouds race, and break, and roar  
About me ; let the melted lava plough  
Raw furrows in my breast ; torment me sore,

O God! Let me hate loneliness, yet see  
My very forest felled beneath my eyes.  
Give me all Time's distilléd agony,—  
Yet let me still stand, mute, beneath the skies ;  
Thro' storms that beat and inward fires that burn,  
Tortured, yet silent ; suffering, yet pure,—  
That torn and tempted hearts may lift and learn  
The noble meaning of the word *endure*.

## MOODS

**W**HEN the great sea roars, like a million lions  
With leaping bodies and lashing manes,  
And flings itself in a terrible passion  
Across the tide's black, reeking plains,  
My soul springs up in its clay-walled prison,  
In a mad desire to be out and free —  
To shake the land with that animal power,  
And be one with the tempest that rocks the sea.

When the tide creeps out and the moon looks over  
The far, blue, cloud-vexed mountain line,  
And the night is sweet, and the red and white clover  
Like stars in the murmurous meadow shine;  
When the winds crawl back, like beasts that are con-  
quered,  
And the sea lies sobbing, her passion spent, —  
My soul rests glad, in its wise, stern prison  
And sinks to a tender and sweet content.

## THE FALLING STAR



DOWN thro' the purple, scented dusk  
A red star swiftly fell.  
Was it a passionate soul that loved  
Not wisely but too well,  
And scorning heaven's cold delight,  
Joined its lost love in hell?



## TO AN ENEMY

**L**ITTLE snake, little snake,  
Hiding in the grass—  
Lo, I crush thee with my heel  
As I pass!

Little snake, little snake,  
See thy slimy track—  
Ah, for shame, to stab and stab  
In the back!

Just for once a woman be,  
Open fight to make—  
I love an honest enemy;  
I loathe a snake.

Useless, harmless, treacherous—  
Hiss thy little time!  
Thy only hope of fame can be  
Thro' my rhyme.

## THE LINGERING OF THE FLOWERS



I know a hollow in the wood  
Where spring her luring witchery weaves,  
But now the winds have made of it  
A lonely sepulchre of leaves ;  
Here Pan blows on his reeded pipes,  
And for the summer grieves.

The desolation of the year  
Is coming on apace, I know,  
But still the everlasting's pearls  
Shine by the roadside, row on row ;  
And late bur-marigolds, like lamps,  
In dark, lush places glow.

Still, still the tall wild asters stand  
In lavender groups beside the way,  
The sunlight's fading splendor gilds  
The white-veiled beryl of the bay ;


And the last yellow violet  
I found but yesterday.

Cross any little stream, and see  
The brooklime's tiny azure eyes !  
Surely they stole that perfect hue  
Right out of last June's fairest skies,  
And kept it hidden until now —  
Just for a sweet surprise.

We hear the meadow-lark at morn,  
With joy veined thro' and thro' with pain ;  
He knows the secret — how to lure  
Our dear, lost springtimes back again,  
And shake their sweetness thro' his notes  
Like drops of golden rain.

The dark and lonely winter days —  
How soon, how soon they will be here !  
But even the darkest one will hold  
One small, pale blossom of good cheer ;  
And oh, the sweet things that will come  
With the throb of another year !

## CHRISTMAS EVE

 STRAIGHT thro' a fold of purple mist  
The sun goes down—a crimson wheel—  
And like an opal burns the sea  
That once was cold as steel.

With pomp of purple, gold and red,  
Thou wilt come back at morrow's dawn . . .  
But thou can'st never bring, O Sun,  
The Christmas that is gone!

## SUNRISE ON THE WILLAMETTE



HE sun sinks downward thro' the silver  
mist  
That looms across the valley, fold on  
fold,  
And sliding thro' the fields that dawn has kissed,  
Willamette sweeps, each dimple set with gold.

Sweeps onward ever, curving as it goes,  
Past many a hill and many a flowered lea,  
Until it pauses where Columbia flows,  
Deep-tongued, deep-chested, to the waiting sea.

O lovely vales thro' which Willamette slips!  
O vine-clad hills that hear its soft voice call!  
My heart turns ever to those sweet, cool lips!  
That, passing, press each rock or grassy wall.

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Thro' pasture lands, where mild-eyed cattle feed,  
    Thro' marshy flats, where velvet tulés grow,  
Past many a rose-tree, many a singing reed,  
    I hear those wet lips calling, calling low.

The sun sinks downward thro' the trembling haze,  
    The mist flings glistening needles high and higher,  
And thro' the clouds — O fair beyond all praise! —  
    Mount Hood leaps, chastened, from a sea of fire.

## THE PATHWAY OF SOULS



THE lonely midnight, deep and still,  
    Pressed hard upon the sea ;  
Up came the moon above the hill,  
    Slowly and silently.

No voice, no step, no sound I heard,  
    No early chanticleer ;  
Not even a murmur of the frogs  
    Dreaming within the mere.

No star was lit in the near sky,  
    No lamp on earth below ;  
But o'er the purple water led  
    A path as white as snow.

One softest wind blew from the hill  
    And shook into my room,  
A flower from a locust tree  
    And a locust flower's perfume.

And then with open eyes I saw  
A flight of eerie things,  
And then with listening ears I heard  
A rush of eerie wings.

And of a sudden then I knew  
Why all was still and white :  
*The dead had visited the earth  
Along that path of light.*



## HAVE MERCY UPON US

**W**E come in ease and luxury to-day,  
In velvet pews to kneel, and, kneeling, say  
Our prayers to Thee; and all the while  
we pray,  
Lord God, Lord God, have mercy upon us!

We are the people who believe in Thee;  
We are the people who believe that He,  
Thine own son, died for all humanity—  
Yet, Lord, Lord God, have mercy upon us!

Of all the Pharisees that were or be,  
None were or are so shameless quite as we—  
*That we are not as others to thank Thee!*  
O Lord, O Lord, have mercy upon us!

We draw the satin skirt away from sin  
Embodied in that woman sad and thin,  
Whom once Christ bade a new life to begin —  
    Lord God, Lord God, have mercy upon us !

'Tis not for us to minister to such,  
Or marvel on, or pity overmuch ;  
(Only the rose-leaf sin for us to touch !)  
    O Lord, Lord God, have mercy upon us !

“ We thank Thee, God,” we daily say, “ that we  
Are not as Jews and unbelievers be.”  
The shame of it — to give such thanks to Thee !  
    Yet, Lord, Lord God, have mercy upon us !

“ We thank Thee, God,” we daily say, “ for all  
The blessings Thou hast giv'n us, great or small,  
Which on less favored ones may never fall.”  
    Have mercy, Lord — have mercy upon us !

“ We thank Thee, God,” we daily say, “ that we  
Are not as blinded ones and cripples be.”

*That others bear the crosses to thank Thee !*

Have mercy, Lord, have mercy upon us !

Forgive us all. We know not what we say.  
None are so ignorant, dear God, as they  
Who bend to Thee, yet know not what they pray.

Have pity, Lord, and mercy upon us !

## AUGUST



It is the month of falling stars,  
Of golden days and silver nights,  
Of sunsets wrought of rose and pearl,  
And fired with opal lights.

The splendor deepens day by day,  
Larger each night the languid moon  
Swims silently thro' ether deeps  
Less blue than those of June.

In little creamy, tossing drifts,  
Dog-fennel blossoms everywhere;  
The perfume of the wild, rich musk  
Is spilt along the air.

The pale pink eglantine is gone,  
The sweet-pea pods burst in the sun;  
The crimson poppy petals fade  
And scatter, one by one.


But seas of yarrow rise and fall,  
And all along the country ways  
The generous golden-rod uplifts  
Her bright and plummy sprays.

On rocky ledges o'er the sea  
The columbine no longer swings,  
But there the blue-bell silently  
Her wordless vesper rings.

Each month has her own ravishments,  
And August has the mellow moon,  
And stars that fall thro' ether deeps  
Less blue than those of June.

The dim, sweet, golden distances  
With rose and purple faintly sown,  
The wind's low, hesitating note —  
These things are August's own.

## LOVE

 BEFORE Love came —  
(*The rose lifts up its head and longs for rain*)  
Before Love came I sang of Love —  
Its joy, its pain.

But when Love came —  
(*The rose beneath the longed-for rain is bent*)  
But when Love came — its joy, its pain —  
All my song went.

## THE POET AND THE STAR



POET sang to a star,  
Ay, sang out his soul — to die;  
But ever the crimson heart  
Of the star beat in the sky.

The poet sang to one star,  
Ay, sang out his soul — alone;  
But the star with the crimson heart  
For a world of poets shone.

## TWO PRAYERS

**L**ORD, I have often prayed  
One deep wrong to forget ;  
And Thou hast granted me that prayer,  
And I should thank Thee, yet —

To-night, O God, I kneel,  
Of conscience-torment free,  
And with a clearer knowledge make  
A later, stronger plea :

Let me remember, God,  
Though that drive peace from me !  
To rise above myself, I need  
The scourge of memory.



## JUNE



**SWEET-LIPPED** she comes across the  
purpling land,  
With laughter that is shaken thro' with  
tears ;  
Bearing within the pink cup of her hand  
Attar of pleasures pluck'd from sweeter years.


## THE LAMP IN THE WEST

**V**ENUS has lit her silver lamp  
Low in the purple West,  
Breathing a soft and mellow light  
Upon the sea's full breast ;  
It is the hour when velvet winds  
Tremble the alder's crest.

Far out, far out the restless bar  
Starts from a troubled sleep,  
Where roaring thro' the narrow straits  
The meeting waters leap ;  
But still that shining pathway leads  
Across the lonely deep.

When I sail out the narrow straits  
Where unknown dangers be,  
And cross the troubled, moaning bar  
To the mysterious sea —  
Dear God, wilt thou not set a lamp  
Low in the West for me ?

## THE SIMPLE CREED OF CHRIST

“AVE I not worked, O God?  
Have I not toiled and borne?  
Sackcloth for secret sin  
Have I not worn?

“ Have I not dwelt and knelt  
In bitterness alone —  
Eating my Dead-Sea fruit —  
And made no moan?

“ Have I not plead for strength  
My punishment to bear,  
Pressing my heart's wild cry  
Thro' midnight air?

“ Night after night, O God,  
Have I not laid me prone,  
Brow bent upon the floor —  
Yet made no moan?

“ The stony way thou gavest  
Have I not bravely trod ?  
Have I breathed one reproach,  
O God, O God ?

“ Hast Thou e'er known my feet  
The cruellest thorn to shun ?  
Have I not bled, and said —  
*‘ Thy will be done ? ’*

“ Yea, when the deepest hurt  
Festered in my heart's core,  
‘ This I deserved,’ I said ;  
‘ All this — and more.’

“ In my supremest pain,  
Repentance and despair,  
My deepest plea has been  
For strength to bear.

“ Strength to endure my sin  
And eat its fruits, and live —  
This and the wilder cry  
Of ‘ *Lord, forgive !* ’

“What more can I do, God,  
To win from pain release?  
What more, O God, what more  
For peace, for peace?”

So prayed the woman. Pale  
Was she, and thin and worn,  
And hollow-browed and eyed,  
And passion-torn.

And — “Child,” God answered her,  
“When first thou asked of me —  
*Truly repenting all* —  
I forgave thee.

“One more thing thou must have,  
And that is Faith. Deplore  
Thy sins no longer. Go —  
*And sin no more.*”

“MY VINEYARD WHICH WAS MINE  
IS BEHIND ME ”


**M**Y vineyard lies behind me, and I toil  
Across the barren land ;  
My lips are parched and thirsty, and my  
feet  
Sink deep in burning sand.

If I could but remember as I go  
My vineyard-keeper's face,  
With that proud look which once for me it wore,  
So full of trust and grace !

But adding torture to each bleeding step,  
At night, at noon, at morn,  
I see and see, shrink from it as I will,  
That one last look of scorn.

I think, perhaps, I could endure the thirst,  
The blistering sand and skies ;  
But O my God ! spare me the supreme pain  
Of remembering those eyes.


## TWO

HE toiled up Calvary with her cross —  
Bending beneath its weight,  
Patient, undaunted, to the top  
Nor murmured at her fate.

She toiled up Calvary with her cross,  
In anguish and in pain ;  
The world of men her courage praised  
And cheered — I heard them plain.

But while men shout her praises loud,  
And flowers at her feet toss,  
Pity, O God, the feebler one  
Who sank beneath her cross.

## BESIDE THE SEA

AILY the fishers' sails drift out  
Upon the ocean's breast,  
But nightly, like white courier doves,  
They all come home to rest.

Would my lost faith and trust in thee  
Were sails far out the main, —  
That in these lonely, sleepless nights  
They might come home again.



## PARTING

### A WORDLESS PRAYER

**L**ORD, Lord, we cannot pray to-night,  
Our lips are rest of speech,  
But we two clinging, shaking, kneel,  
Hearts beating each on each.

There are deep kisses on our lips,  
Deep with all chaste desire,  
And every vein is running full  
With keen, delicious fire.

And oh, the pulses in our palms!—  
Feel, God, how strong they beat!  
How can we bid our lips to pray  
In hours so silent-sweet?

But though we cannot pray to-night,  
Each kiss is one deep plea  
That Thou wilt keep me true to him,  
And him — Lord, Lord! — to me.

## DECEMBER



**FLIGHT** of snow-birds huddling North,  
Etched on the dull gray atmosphere,  
Against the dull gray, sullen sky.  
Across the wide and frozen mere,  
Upon whose blue and languorous breast  
The water-lilies dreamed in June,  
The wind among the bended reeds  
Plays a shrill, high and lonely tune.


Level and brown the meadows stretch  
Between the hills of needled fir ;  
Only bare branches bend and toss,  
Where all the summer's blossoms were ;  
In stubble fields the cattle stand  
With drooping heads behind the stacks,  
And horses' feet strike crimson sparks,  
As they spring down the frozen tracks.

One maple tree stands gray and cold,  
    With thin arms to the sky outflung —  
Ah, me! It seems but yesterday  
    That wild birds in its branches sung,  
Loved, mated, nested; later, taught  
    The rapture of their own sweet notes —  
A very ravishment of song —  
    To little tremulous, startled throats.

With mournful cries the wild geese fly,  
    Hurrying to the red-lipped South.  
The only warmth — one crimson rose,  
    Sweet as a woman's unkissed mouth.  
The bleak tide-lands and grieving gulls,  
    Where once blue waves and sunlight were . . .  
And in my breast a memory,  
    Where once was that glad heart of her.

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## THE CZAR OF ALL THE RUSSIAS

“HE Czar is dying!” . . . And the long  
day passed,  
And Dusk came up the awful Russian  
plain

And dimmed the palace where the Czar at last  
Lay bound with thongs of pain.

The hours stole by, and the attendants slept;  
For a brief space the monarch was alone.  
Elsewhere the worn Czarina sobbed and wept  
In stifled undertone.

The Czar of all the Russias — even he! —  
Lay suffering torture with each labored breath;  
Soon to be stripped of all his majesty  
For the majesty of Death.

“A wise and noble Ruler,” Europe said . . .

And of a sudden trembles many a throne  
Which will have lost a friend when he is dead  
Who lieth there alone.

But thro' the night what awful sounds are these  
That on his dying ear now break and swell,  
Like voices caught and borne upon the breeze  
From spirits out of hell?

What is this long procession stumbling past  
With bleeding feet and outcries of despair—  
Wan-eyed, white-lipped, with faces all aghast,  
And rent and tangled hair?

Great God, what prayers mount the silent night  
From those thin lips! What tears those wild eyes  
weep!

What curses from those corded throats and white  
Burst strong and fierce and deep!

102 THE CZAR OF ALL THE RUSSIAS

Oh, see the bare backs guttered by the knout !  
The prints of blood where those torn feet have  
trod !  
Pure women spat upon, their strength worn out —  
Dost Thou see these things, God ?

The Czar of all the Russias sees them — ay,  
Although his eyes are swiftly growing dim ;  
Those anguished prayers breathed to the silent sky  
Are audible to him.

He sees old men with bare and mangled backs  
Go staggering on with neither sleep nor rest ;  
The fainting mothers falling in their tracks  
With starved lips at the breast.

Who are these ghosts ? Have they come up from  
hell  
Across Siberian steppes once more to bleed ?  
To crouch at last in a foul prison cell,  
On tortured thought to feed ?

The Czar — the Czar of all the Russias — knows.

\* \* \* \* \*

Attendants, ho! Awake! the Czar is dead!  
Straighten the body and the wild eyes close —  
Set the crown above the head!

Now, every wretch beneath Siberian star —  
Give praise to Heaven with uplifted head!  
Thank God, thank God, that all the Russias' Czar  
Is dead — is dead — is dead!

## “THE EVERGREEN STATE”



Y chosen state, to thee—

Cleft by the Opal Sea,

Evergreen state!

Land of the emerald ferns,

Land where the sunset burns—

To thee my heart e'er turns,

With thee I wait.

When sunset fires thy peaks,

Mountain to mountain speaks—

“Dark hours are near!”

But when the night is done

Rays of soft color run

Up from the rising sun,—

Flashing—“Good cheer!”



Thy future shall be grand,  
Arise and take thy stand —  
    Strong, proud and free!  
In the world's march, keep tread  
Where Truth's white star has led,  
Let no hard word be said,  
    Ever, of thee!

All thy mistakes are past,  
Lift up thy head at last —  
    Smile thro' thy tears!  
Thy darkest hour is gone,  
Hail, hail the golden dawn —  
Press on thy course, and on  
    Thro' all the years!

## ALWAYS SOME ONE BELOW



**O**N the lowest round of the ladder  
I silently set my feet,  
And looked into the dim, high distance  
That made my future sweet.

I climbed till my vision grew weary,  
I climbed till my brain was on fire,  
I mounted with caution and wisdom—  
Yet I never seemed to get higher.

For this round was glazed with indifference,  
And that round was gilded with scorn,  
And when I grasped firmly another  
I found under velvet a thorn.

Till my brain grew weary of planning,  
And my heart-strength began to fail,  
And the flush of the morning's excitement  
Ere evening commenced to pale.

But just as my hands were unclasping  
Their hold on the last gainéd round,  
And my hopes, coming back from the future,  
Were sinking again to the ground,

One, close to the top of the ladder,  
Reached downward a helping hand,  
And refreshed, encouraged and strengthened,  
I took once again my stand.

And I wish — oh, I wish — that the climbers  
Would never forget as they go  
That, though weary may seem their climbing,  
There is always some one below.

## THE WRECK OF THE *PREMIER*



UPON the wide dull water-stretch  
The deep fog sank and lay,  
The firs along the rugged shore,  
Climbed out like spectres gray,  
And the hoarse voice of the *Premier* called,  
Pleading, across the bay.

Each heart upon the fated ship  
Leaped into that wild cry,  
And tears of mingled hope and fear  
Trembled in every eye,  
And lips that would not pray, yet prayed  
In a deep, unconscious sigh.

Oh, but the voice in that swart throat  
Plead passionate and strong!  
And the bell-buoy farther out to sea  
Tolled mournfully and long! . . .

One poor mute mother by her dead  
Knelt in that white-faced throng.

Only the dead upon the decks  
Heard not that passioned call,  
They that had suddenly grown wise,  
Indifferent to all —  
Complaining not tho' the chill fog  
Spread o'er them her gray pall.

At last came level-browed Despair  
And sate our hearts among.  
Then there were some, bereft of hope,  
That wept, or prayed, or sung;  
And still across the sullen sea  
That supplication rung.

But of a sudden thro' the dark  
Came the strong, thrilling cry  
Of a pilot steering straight for us  
And signalling — "Ay, ay!"  
As if he bade us — "Be of cheer  
And not afraid — 'tis I!"

Oh, bent was every knee that hour  
And bowed was every head;  
The mother stirred, and her pale lips  
Prayed now above her dead;  
And then she wept — as if the prayer  
Her grief had softenéd.

Thou shipwreck'd soul upon Life's sea —  
Call to thy pilot so!  
Call long and loud, and call again,  
And if thou doubttest, lo!  
Call once again . . . and still once more . . .  
He'll answer thee . . . I know.

## A FAIRY'S LOVE-SONG



H, fireflies, fireflies, light all your candles,  
For down, deep down in the sea's wet  
bed,  
The wise little fishes have lighted their  
lanterns,  
And luminous jellyfish tents are spread.

I know not the way that my sweetheart is coming,  
Over the mountain or vale or sea,  
But if o'er the water, I know that the fishes  
Swing tiny gold lanterns to light him to me.


The nights are deceptive and dangers are lurking —  
Fireflies, fireflies, trim every lamp!  
And red little glow-worms, keep watch in the marshes,  
Down where the highways are dark and damp.

For he may come over the purple-rimmed mountain,  
Riding astride of a buffeted leaf;  
Or over the sea on a gull's snowy feather  
That any wild hour may be dashed on a reef!

And heaven, dear heaven, in each of thy windows  
Set a star burning — I know not the day  
Or the night, or the hour, that my sweetheart is  
coming,  
So light him and guide him upon his way.



## FINIS

“HE night is black and cold and wet,  
The winter winds are strong and wild,  
And in the grave beside my own  
This noon they laid a little child —  
So low, so low, so dark and deep,  
This narrow box that I lie in ;  
I cannot turn, I cannot weep,  
My chest is sunk, my face is thin.

“I hear the wind shriek through the trees,  
I hear the hurrying sheets of rain ;  
I beat my bony, fleshless hands,  
And feel my eyeballs burn and strain.  
I see again my blazing hearth,  
And its red light strike up the wall ;  
I see you lonely in your chair,  
I hear again your tender call.

“Not God, but only fools, would think  
A grave could hold us two apart;  
I'll burst this lid, and by God's help  
Beat my way back into your heart!” . . .  
She burst the lid with bleeding hands  
And bruised breast, and dug her way,  
Slow, and with patience, inch by inch,  
Up through the clammy, yellow clay.

Then, strong and eager, struggled down  
The hill, against the tempest's wrath,  
Into the still, white town below —  
How well she knew that narrow path!  
Then paused, uncertain, at the gate  
Of that dear place where she had dwelt,  
And wondered if her room were changed,  
Or that white bed where she had knelt,


And tried — and half forgot — to pray,  
Or failed to keep her thoughts above,  
Because one waited for her lips —  
Because two hearts beat fast with love. . . .

She fancied how he sat alone,  
With head down-dropped upon his breast,  
And grieving lips, and saddened eyes,  
And mourned for her, and found no rest.

She lightly entered, leaped the stair,  
Not one small nook had she forgot,  
Into the warmth of her old room —  
But those two saw her, heard her, not.  
In her old chair beside the hearth  
He sat, and kneeling at his side —  
Tender and lovely as a dream —  
The dead wife saw the living bride.

Then crept she sobbing up the hill,  
Back to the City of the Dead.  
“O fool! To strive against God’s will!  
Lie in thy grave, content!” she said. . . .  
And in the cottage down the hill  
The bridegroom stirred in strange unrest,  
And thought of one in a storm-swept grave,  
With “Finis” carven o’er her breast.

## “WHERE CAN SHE BE?”

FTER the baby died the house seemed dark  
And cold, as if the sun had passed it by,  
Even though the month was June, and not  
a cloud  
Troubled the brightness of the golden sky.

And it was, oh! so lonely and so still.

The kitten, undisturbed, curled on the floor,  
And fifty times a day with questioning eyes  
The old house-dog came to the open door,

And looked as if he said: “Why, where is Nell—  
The little girl that used to play with me?  
And pull my curls, and clasp my faithful neck  
With tender, loving arms—where can she be?”

There was a new note in the plaintive song  
Her pet canary sang all day to me—  
A note that said: “That little merry girl,  
Whose laugh was music sweet—where can she be?”

The very wind that blew from off the hills  
Stole grieving thro' the house, most lonesomely,  
And sighed: “Where are the tangled curls I tossed,  
The warm red cheeks I cooled—where can they be?”

Her doll sleeps in its little snowy bed—  
Her oldest, shabbiest doll she loved the best—  
Just as she “tucked it in” the last, last time,  
With many a pat and kiss upon it pressed.

And oh, how often every day the tears  
Come leaping up to my poor, aching eyes,  
And I go groping blindly to that bed,  
That tiny bed where her “dear dolly” lies,

And lay my face close to its battered face,  
Which her dear tears and kisses washed like rain—  
Yet mindful not to change one bit of lace—  
And weep and sob, and weep and sob again.

And then, remembering in my bitter grief  
Somewhere, perhaps, some other “dolly” lies—  
Its little mother gone—I pray: “O God,  
Be in the lonely homes—when baby dies!”

# THE "DROPPING-SONG" OF THE MOCKING-BIRD

TO MR. MAURICE THOMPSON

**H**ALF rousing from my sleep by a far North-  
ern sea,  
Blown through the perfumed Southern  
silences, I heard,  
Across my waking dreams, the tremulous, drowsy notes  
Of the entralling nocturn of the mocking-bird.

Then suddenly I heard a shivering of the leaves,  
Where leaves were not, and a most marvellous, full  
song  
Of lyric fire and rapt, delicious ecstasy,  
That throbbed within my veins, sweet, passionate,  
and long.


**“DROPPING-SONG” OF MOCKING-BIRD 121**

So I have heard thy singer's "dropping-song," O  
South,

Though I have never breathed the soft winds off  
thy sea!

Even as a monk knows sweetness of a woman's mouth  
In dreams — so have I known a bird's love-ecstasy.

## THAT OTHER PRAYER

OMETIMES I kneel when twilight falls,  
And try to ask the Lord  
To lean one moment from above  
And hear my trembling word ;  
But scarcely have I knelt, when quick  
Springs that old aching care,  
And with a tremble on my lips,  
I pray that other prayer.

With that old choke within my throat,  
Those old hot, useless tears,  
With which I used to kneel and say  
That prayer in other years ;  
With the same beating of my heart,  
Bowed by the same fierce care,  
And the old tremble on my lips,  
I pray that other prayer.



It was not answered — nay ; and I  
 Now would not have it so,  
 And that is why God heard it not,  
 And it was best, yet, oh !  
 So often in that sky-lit room  
 With walls so cold and bare,  
 With that poor tremble on my lips,  
 I prayed that other prayer !

And so, tho' it was answered not,  
 And old desire is dead,  
 I cannot kneel these happier nights  
 Beside this other bed,  
 But the quick choke comes to my throat,  
 Vibrant to that old care,  
 And ere I know, with trembling lips,  
 I've prayed that other prayer !

## TO ONE LEAVING FOR SWEDEN

**W**HEN soft and deep in Sweden's skies  
Moons burn like golden fire,  
And the nightingale thrills all the wood  
With exquisite desire,

Turn, turn upon thy pillow then,  
And think how dark and still  
The firs wait for the rising moon  
On lonely Sehome hill.

Turn from thy song-bird's ravishment —  
And think how mournfully  
The night-hawk blows its lonely note  
By Puget's lonely sea.

## THE AWAKENING



WILL take heart again ; the spring  
Comes over Sehome hill,  
And like tall, splintered spears of gold  
The firs stand, soft and still ;  
Happily in its moist, brown throat  
Chatters a loosened rill.

Below, across the violet sea,  
With glistening, restless wings,  
The seabirds cleave the purple air  
In white and endless rings ;  
Somewhere, within an open space,  
One of God's own larks sings.

The warm breath of the waking earth  
Curls up from myriad lips,  
And who has loved and lost now drinks  
In deep and trembling sips,

## THE AWAKENING

With memory's passionate pulse astir  
From heart to finger-tips.

The ferns lift delicate veiny palms  
In dimples of the hills,  
The spendthrift hyacinth's perfume  
Along the pure air spills ;  
There is a breathing, faint and far,  
From the dark throats of the mills.

The spider flings a glittering thread  
From dewy blade to blade,  
A robin drops on bended wing,  
Near me, yet unafraid ;  
The early frosts have taken rout  
Before the red sun's raid.

Behold, the earth is glad again,  
And she has taken heart,  
And in her swelling, fruitful breast,  
God's own love-flowers start.  
(Lord, may I not take courage, too ?  
I and my old self part ?)

Yea, when the birds grow dumb again  
With pure delights that thrill  
Their rapt and innocent souls, till they  
Have not desire or will  
For song, or sun, or anything  
But passion deep and still,

I will go into the dim wood  
And lie prone on the sod,  
My breast close to the warm earth-breast,  
Prostrate, alone with God,  
Of all his poor and useless ones,  
The poorest, useless clod ;

And I will pray (so earnestly  
He cannot help but hear):  
“ Lord, Lord, let me take heart again,  
Let my faith shine white and clear,  
Let me awaken with the earth,  
And leave my old self here ! ”

## LOST

**H**AS any one found a dream?  
It was lost I know not where —  
And alas! I know not how —  
So dear, so sweet, so fair!

I have sought for it in vain,  
Yea, weeks and months and years;  
Eager one day with hope —  
The next, bowed down with tears.

God made it — no one else.  
Not one on earth could make  
A thing so dear its loss  
A woman's heart could break.

*Has any one found it? Speak.  
It was white as the whitest dove.  
All else is offered for it!  
Its name, I think, was — Love.*

## THE SNOW

**F**OR weeks the snow went riding by,  
Borne on the high, shrill winds  
That seethed thro' cracks and eddied the  
grain  
In the farmer's well-filled bins,  
Or mourned — poor outcasts of the night —  
As a penitent for his sins.

For weeks the snow spun round the hill,  
And settled on the lea ;  
It climbed up high about the doors,  
And spangled every tree ;  
It reached one soft, white, jewelled arm  
Around the cold, dark sea.

It deepened on the frozen mere  
And on the frozen bay ;  
And on the porches and the roofs  
Unevenly it lay,

Until the wind sprang from the North     ⓐ  
And carried it away,

And bore it, hissing, up the air  
In a long, funnelled whirl;  
Or pressed its bulk around some tree  
In a deep, voluptuous curl;  
Or hurried it down to the South  
In a nervous, blinding swirl.

Long icicles grew, drop on drop,  
And hung from all the eaves,  
And every pane was frescoed o'er  
With pictures Zero weaves —  
Like cobwebs, when the heavy frost  
Is on the autumn leaves.

And still the snow fell on the fields  
That once were sweet with hay,  
And on the lawn where, soft and deep.  
Once cherry blossoms lay . . .  
And on the grave of the little child  
That laughed with us last May.



## ENDURING



MADE this bitter bread myself,  
The flour was fine and white ;  
How could I guess such bitterness  
Dwelt in a thing so light ?

With my own hands I pluck'd the grapes  
That spilled this awful wine ;  
They looked so tempting and so sweet,  
Purpling upon the vine.

But since my own self made the bread,  
Myself pluck'd every grape,  
I eat and drink — their bitterness  
I seek not to escape.

But sometimes in my loneliness  
With lifted, praying eyes,  
I sing the dear, remembered sweets  
Of my lost paradise.

## ENDURING

As some poor, starving bird, perchance,  
Crouching on broken wing,  
With sudden passionate memory  
Of highest heaven might sing.

But ere the last note breaks and dies  
I bow myself and drink  
This awful wine, and eat this bread —  
And murmur not nor shrink.

## THE LOW BROWN HILLS



DID not love them overmuch  
Till I had turned away,  
But now they glimmer thro' my dreams,  
They haunt the summer day —  
The low brown hills, the bare brown hills  
Of San Francisco Bay.

My heart ached for their barrenness,  
Their browns veined thro' with gray ;  
No tree where some sweet Western bird  
Might sit and sing his lay —  
But low brown hills and bare brown hills  
Of San Francisco Bay.

## THE LOW BROWN HILLS

Not one slim blade of living green  
To make the soft slopes gay ;  
No dim secluded forest dells  
Where one might kneel and pray —  
But low brown hills and bare brown hills  
Of San Francisco Bay.

But ah, their hold upon my heart  
Now I am far away !  
They glimmer thro' my dreams at night,  
They haunt the summer day —  
The low brown hills, the bare brown hills  
Of San Francisco Bay.

Tell me the secret of this charm  
That ever night and day,  
From greener lands and sweeter lands  
Draws thought and dream away  
To the low brown hills, the bare brown hills  
Of San Francisco Bay.

## THE COMING OF SPRING



**O**NCE more Spring's dear, remembered thrill  
The winter's heart went through —  
Out came the willow silverly  
And white the shad-bush blew.

A voice went thro' the emerald land  
And "Wake, wake, Robin," cried;  
A brook burst out in laughter sweet,  
And straight the winter sighed.

The gay wild-currant saucily  
Came stepping out in red —  
A dear, delicious light-o'-love,  
With blushes overspread.

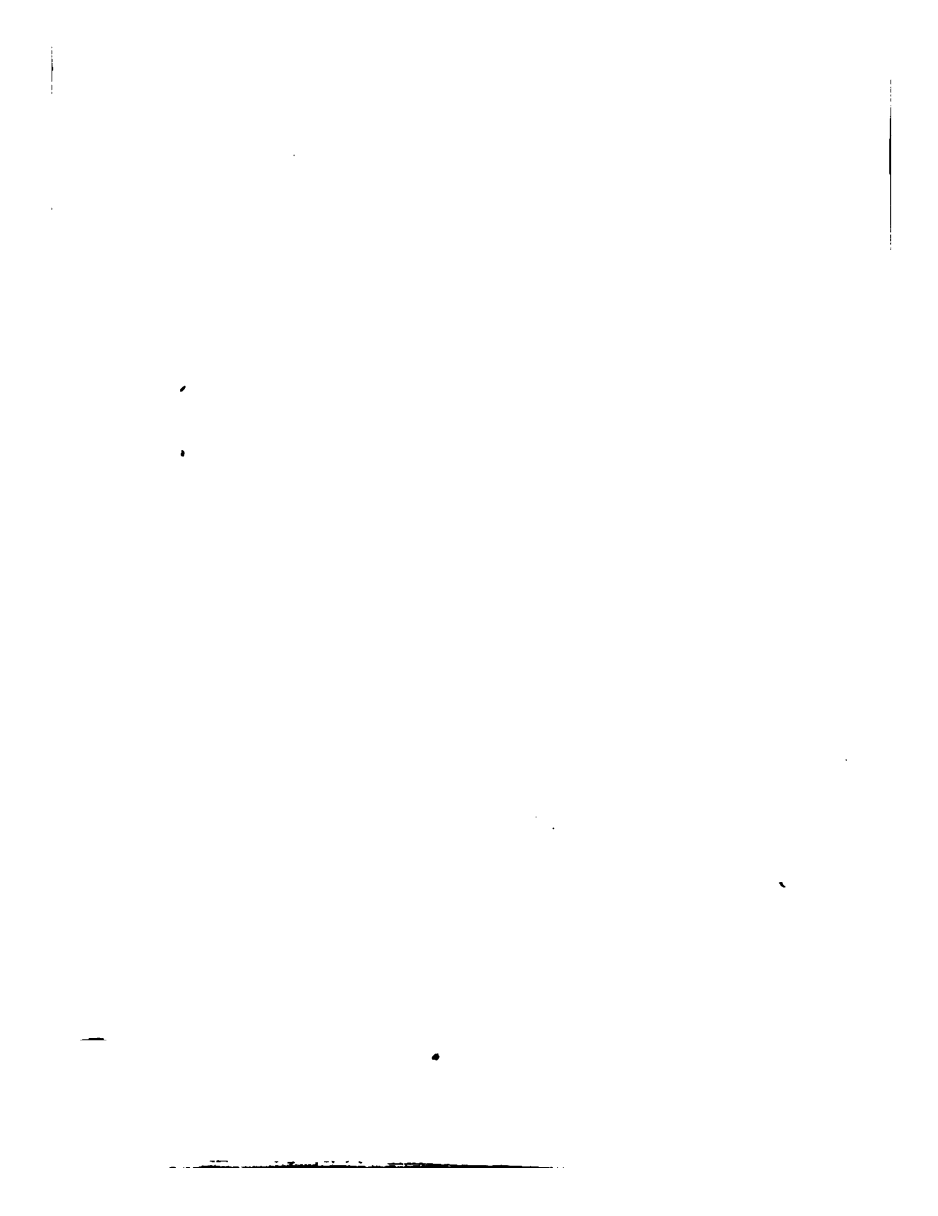
A little meadow that I know  
Ran suddenly to gold,  
Till every lifted buttercup  
Had more than it could hold.

The yellow finches perched and sang  
Their few notes sweet and loud,  
Or drifted up against the blue —  
A bright, melodious cloud.

But oh, but oh, the meadow-lark!  
And oh, the song he sang!  
All rapture, passion, tenderness  
Ached thro' me while it rang.

And as I listening bowed my head  
To hide the springing tear,  
Lo, all about me — violets!  
And Spring herself was here.

## SONNETS





## YET AM I NOT FOR PITY

### I

**F**OR me there are no cities, no proud halls,  
No storied paintings—nor the chiselled  
snow

Of statues; never have I seen the glow  
Of sunset die upon the deathless walls  
Of the pure Parthenon; no soft light falls  
For me in dim cathedrals, where the low,  
Still seas of supplication ebb and flow;  
No dream of Rome my longing soul entralls.  
But oh, to gaze in a long tranced delight  
On Venice rising from the purple sea!  
Oh, but to feel one golden evening pale  
On that famed island from whose lonely height  
Dark Sappho sank in burning ecstasy!  
But once — but once — to hear the nightingale!

## II

Yet am I not for pity. This blue sea  
Burns with the opal's deep and splendid fires  
At sunset ; these tall firs are classic spires  
Of chaste design and marvellous symmetry  
That lift to burnished skies. Let pity be  
For him who never felt the mighty lyres  
Of Nature shake him thro' with great desires.  
These pearl-topped mountains shining silently —  
They are God's sphinxes and God's pyramids ;  
These dim-aisled forests His cathedrals, where  
The pale nun Silence tiptoes, velvet-shod,  
And Prayer kneels with tireless, parted lids ;  
And thro' the incense of this holy air  
Trembling — I have come face to face with God.


## AN AUTUMN DAY



THE sunlight pales upon the ragged ferns  
And the dog-fennel's creamy drifts of  
snow,  
And two white butterflies — child-spirits  
— go

Winging their ways. The maple forest burns  
Along the mountainside — so red it turns  
The very air to crimson. Sweet and low  
The brooks go singing, loitering as they flow,  
And all the hollow stumps are rustic urns  
Heaped to their scalloped brims with yellow leaves.  
In every pasture lifts the golden-rod  
Its bending plumes ; the fields are reft of sheaves  
Where late the merry gleaners, singing, trod.  
One broken frond of mist the soft air cleaves —  
The year's last incense pushing up to God.

## GOING BLIND


NE time I heard a tender story told  
About a mother who was going blind,  
And ere the light went out forever, signed  
Unto her children — while the sunset's gold  
In burning ribbons down the West unrolled —  
To gather close about, that she might trace  
The lines upon each well-belovéd face,  
That after — so I heard the story told —  
Sun, moon, and stars, and all dear things might fade,  
And still their faces clearly be outlined  
Against the golden background of that day.  
Then came long night — but she was not afraid,  
And ever answered — “Nay, I am not blind;  
My children's faces star my lonely way.”

## THE SPENT YEAR



HE russet ferns toss in the chilly rain,  
The dense cloud-fragments break along  
the hill;  
The golden-rod is gone, the bees are still;  
The screaming sea-gulls toil across the main,  
And, like poor shipwrecked souls, seek peace again.  
The lonely waves beat on the lonely shore,  
And hark! far out — the desolate ocean's roar!  
Shrill winds among the naked trees complain,  
What time I walk deserted ways. Behold!  
It is the dreariest time of heart and year —  
The promise broken and the faith grown cold! . . .  
Yet still does each feel underneath the tear  
A something stirring, veined with fire and gold —  
The deathless heart of Spring, beating with cheer.

## THE SUMMONS

AST night, while sunset burned across the  
land  
And lit with glowing mystery the sea,  
I slept; and in my dreams I saw her  
stand

At heaven's western archway, wistfully.  
She pushed the crimson cloud-portières aside  
With a still movement of her slender arm,  
Sickling one hand above her dear eyes, wide  
With that deep sweetness wherein lay her charm  
Of old, and sent a long look thro' the maze  
Of blending rose and violet and gold,  
While close about her pink cloud-draperies rolled.  
Looked, leaned and beckoned. Then — a blur of haze!  
The clouds burned down to ashes gray and sere,  
And waking — lo! I heard Death's breathing near.

## HE TO HER



EAR, my beloved, lying, oh, so still,  
As if asleep, upon thy liliated bier,  
With eyelids resting like twin snowflakes  
chill

Upon the eyes where once the lovelight clear  
Shone like a beacon set upon a hill —  
Showing me how among the reefs to steer,  
Guiding me, oh, so tenderly until  
My wandering heart sank glad to anchor here  
In thy dear heart! Oh, pure and sweet and true!  
No foolish tears from my hot eyelids start;  
I have no sobs; no wild outbursts are mine;  
Only one sound shakes all this still place through:  
The slow and awful beating of my heart,  
Breaking to feel the answering beat of thine.

## INDIAN SUMMER

**L**IKE palest gold the mellow sunlight creeps  
Across the porch and thro' the open door,  
And spreads a checkered carpet on the  
floor.

The garden's last red poppy, nodding, sleeps,  
And one bee in its heart his senses steeps,  
    With most delicious languor; one slim stalk  
    Of hollyhock still bends beside the walk,  
Starred with its lovely flowers. In soft heaps —  
Like sweet, dead dreams — wind-shaken rose-leaves lie;  
    The opal's fire burns in the clouds that float  
    Across the delicate azure of the sky.  
The wind is one low, soft Æolian note;  
And yellower than the primrose East at morn,  
Stretch the wide, undulating fields of corn.



## DELILAH

**B**ARE shoulders swelling out of scarlet silk ;  
A slender, supple throat, whereon is set  
A perfect, dark-crowned head ; like un-  
creamed milk,

When fallen rose and poppy leaves have met  
And mingled on its surface, is her skin.

Her arms are softer than soft velvets are ;

Deep dimpled are her cheeks and her round chin,  
And never yet has any real star

Shone like the gems that in her bosom rest. . . .

But the slow-lifted eyelid breaks the spell,


And lets the serpent thro' its fair disguise—

Soft flesh, soft throat, soft arms, delicious breast !

Beware ! Beware ! the fires of deepest hell

Burn in those amber, flower-lidded eyes.

## THANKSGIVING

H, some give thanks for barns and garner  
heaped  
Up to their raftered peaks with ripened  
grain ;

Wan sufferers from drouth give thanks for rain ;  
Others — alas ! — for passionate pleasures, steeped  
In wine of lotus bloom. Some that have reaped

Their evil sowing in unbearable pain

Breathe thanks for one brief moment's peace again ;  
The prisoner, for the ray of light that leaped  
Athwart the darkness of his lonely cell,

Like Hope's pale ghost. Beside her chaste, white  
bed

The maiden kneels, her thanks — like beads — to  
tell.

The old and poor give thanks for life and bread ;

And the young mother, for the lips now pressed

To drain sweet strength from her glad, throbbing  
breast.

## DAWN ON THE WILLAMETTE

**B**ETWEEN the pale blue of the morning  
sky  
And the soft, deeper violet of the hill  
Mount Hood stands like a virgin, white  
and still.

The purple mists across the valley lie,  
Run thro' and thro' with primrose lances — ay,  
With rose and amethyst. Sweet, loud and shrill,  
With little swelling throats, the dawn-birds trill  
Their glad hearts out in praise; and proud and high,  
The sun vibrates into the blue, and sets  
Willamette burning like a chain of brass,  
And all the steeples into silhouettes  
Of flame against the sky. Up from the grass  
A pilgrim skylark soars, and throbbing higher,  
Shakes all the air with passion and desire.

## A DREAM OF SAPPHO



THE little hollows in the pavements shine  
With the soft, hesitating April rain,  
That sifts across the city, gray and fine,  
And on the huddling, spent waves of the  
main, —

Where the wild, silver seabirds wheel and scream.

It is a day to lie before the fire,

Turning the key on Thought and Care, and dream  
Of dark-eyed Sappho and her passioned lyre ;  
Her sun-warmed courts columned above the sea ;

Blue skies of Lesbos — ay, and of the kiss

Of the South wind among her bower's leaves.

Who could regret the day's monotony,

In the full rapture of a dream like this —

Set to the faltering music of the eaves !

## APRIL NIGHT



OD calls the day. Soft, luminous and slow,  
The great sun trembles down the trem-  
bling West  
And leaves its gold upon the ocean's  
breast.

Into the East, in one white, chastened glow,  
Rises the silver moon — as yet so low

It seems to draw itself free of the trees.

The golden-cups are drenched with dew; the  
breeze

Is sweet with last night's rain; and blown with snow

The fruit trees stand, pure as a dream of love,

Or kisses of a child; their pale blooms fall —

Still, petaled stars — across the purple light.

And listen — hush! Somewhere a mourning-dove

Is plaining to the silence and the night —

A human heart-break in her grieving call.

## HE SPEAKS AT PARTING



COME close ; come closer yet — for the last  
time ;


And reach thy soft arms round my shoulders — so ;

And if thou speak'st at all, speak very low.  
And give me now thy lips — for the last time —  
The last, and so the very tenderest !

Lift, lift from those dear eyes the petaled snow,  
And let thy passion kindle therein, slow  
And tender-deep. Lean closer on my breast,  
Belovéd, this sweet-bitter parting hour !


God ! if I might in this white dove-cote dwell —  
Forever feel this innocent bosom's swell ! . . .  
Lo ! as a bee goes from a clover flow'r  
Drunken thro' greed, and heavily swooning — so,  
Heavy with sweets as chaste, I staggering go.

## A PERFECT DAY

T is a day lost from some perfect June  
And set within the middle of November.  
It has the golden mystery of September,  
And the blue skies of a warm summer noon.

There is a low wind singing an old tune,  
Sung once by tender winds that I remember ;  
The soft, high sun burns like a crimson ember  
Deep in the blue flame of the air. . . . So soon  
A gray and lonely morrow will arise,  
This fair day well is worth the holding fast.  
Behold ! how dreamily the mute sea lies  
Below ; how seabirds lazily drift past ;  
And how the mountains, white for centuries,  
Shine on the sky. . . . O day, that thou might'st  
last !

## “THE OPAL SEA”

N inland sea — blue as a sapphire — set  
Within a sparkling, emerald mountain  
chain  
Where day and night fir-needles sift like  
rain

Thro' the voluptuous air. The soft winds fret  
The waves, and beat them wantonly to foam.  
The golden distances across the sea  
Are shot with rose and purple. Languorously  
The silver seabirds in wide circles roam.  
The sun drops slowly down the flaming West  
And flings its rays across to set aglow  
The islands rocking on the cool waves' crest  
And the great glistening domes of snow on snow.  
And thro' the mist the Olympics flash and float  
Like opals linked around a beating throat.



## A DREAM



LAY last night and heard the ceaseless rain  
Drip in soft rhythm from the ragged  
caves  
And musically play upon the leaves ;  
The rose-vines trembled on my window-pane,  
And lost from some wild tempest on the plain  
Spent winds came dying up the quiet lea.  
Across the tide-lands ebb'd the shivering sea,  
And knowing the midnight hour was on the wane,  
Sighing, I turned and slept, and, sleeping, dreamed. . . .  
*Straight thro' the dark thou camest, as of old,  
Trembling, yet eager ; strong to claim thine own ;  
The same pure rapture in thy deep eyes beamed.  
I ran to meet thee . . . then a clear bell tolled,  
And I awoke — forevermore alone !*

## A SONNET



WRITE a sonnet? But a sonnet, dear,  
May be the breaking of an Easter morn ;  
Or a low wind among the ripening corn  
When russet silk tops each green-golden  
ear ;

A white, white flower laid upon a bier  
By one whose love dwelt from the world apart ;  
Or a bee-ravished clover-blossom's heart ;  
A glance met once ; a voice so sweet and clear  
Its memory lives thro' all forgotten years ;  
A lonely nighthawk calling to the night ;  
The red flash of a star in downward flight ;  
The trampling thunder of a mighty sea ;  
Or a wild prayer shaken thro' with tears . .  
*Or this long kiss upon the lips of thee !*

## SLEEP



SLEEP, sweet Sleep — lean downward unto  
me,  
And lay thy cool touch on my fevered  
cheek.

Lay all thy fair length close to me, and speak  
Thy language, soft and drowsy as the sea  
That steals up tide-lands slow and lullingy.  
O Sleep, kind Sleep — lean down and press thy lips  
On my tired eyes; let thy cool finger-tips  
Still my hot temples' throb, — ay, let me be  
Cradled within thy arms. . . . And bid me think  
Of clovered banks where long, still shadows creep;  
Of lotus blossoms lolling on a stream;  
Of tinkling brooks where thirsty cattle drink;  
Of drowsy poppy-fields. . . . And bid me dream  
Of him I love, O Sleep, O gentle Sleep!

## THE GRAND RONDE VALLEY



H, me! I know how like a golden flower  
The Grand Ronde valley lies this Au-  
gust night,  
Locked in by dimpled hills where purple  
light  
Lies wavering. There at the sunset hour  
Sink downward, like a rainbow-tinted shower,  
A thousand colored rays, soft, changeful, bright.  
Later the large moon rises, round and white,  
And three Blue Mountain pines against it tower,  
Lonely and dark. A coyote's mournful cry  
Sinks from the cañon — whence the river leaps,  
A blade of silver underneath the moon.  
Like restful seas the yellow wheat-fields lie,  
Dreamless and still. And while the valley sleeps,  
O hear! — the lullabies that low winds croon.

## THE NEW WEST



**S**TAND up, my West! Lift thy young,  
noble head  
On the strong pillar of thy proud, white  
throat,

And let thy gold hair on the sea-winds float.  
In the world's march, keep step with lofty tread  
And firm. If passion from the South has fled,  
And from the North and East, there yet remains  
Its leaping fire in thy full, swelling veins.  
If others have forgot the flag that led  
To independent freedom, and now fail  
To stand in their own strength and pride, and try  
To ape the older nations, thou, my West,  
Stand true— nor let thy stern eyes ever quail,  
As long as thou hast breath for freedom's cry,  
And a strong, passionate heart within thy breast.

## A PRAYER OF THE HEART



**GOD**, lean downward to my couch this  
night —

This awful night of nights — and hear  
the prayer

That fain would struggle up the startled air,  
To vex thine ear, from my lips dumb and white  
With pain. Lean down from heaven's lone delight,  
And lay thy listening ear to my throat — where  
The passionate words stop, voiceless in despair.

God, Thou can'st hear and understand aright  
All that my tortured heart would ask of Thee.

Put out the fires that leap along my veins,  
And bid this beating of my pulses cease!  
Take, take these maddening dreams away from me,  
And cool my eyes with tears like gentle rains . . .  
Hear Thou my wordless prayer! God, give me  
peace!

## THE LAST MESSAGE OF SUMMER



THE dandelion's last pale lamp is lit  
In lowly places where field-daisies blow.  
Over the wind-blown drifts of yarrow-  
snow,  
In yellow clouds the wild canaries flit—  
A farewell lilting thro' their softened notes.  
High in the faint blue ether swims the sun ;  
The sweet-pea pods are bursting, one by one ;  
The bees cling, drunken, to the poppies' throats,  
And oh ! the winds are low among the ferns.  
A golden mist is sifting thro' the pines,  
And grapes are pregnant with their stirring wines ;  
But in the womb of summer sleeps the spring !  
And one lark sings, where yonder maple burns —  
" Another year another hope will bring ! "

## DAWN



HE soft-toned clock upon the stair chimed  
three —

Too sweet for sleep, too early yet to rise.  
In restful peace I lay with half-closed  
eyes,

Watching the tender hours go dreamily ;  
The tide was flowing in ; I heard the sea  
    Shivering along the sands ; while yet the skies  
    Were dim, uncertain, as the light that lies  
Beneath the fretwork of some wild-rose tree  
Within the thicket gray. The chanticleer  
    Sent drowsy calls across the slumbrous air ;  
    In solemn silence sweet it was to hear  
My own heart beat. . . . Then broad and deep and  
fair —

Trembling in its new birth from heaven's womb —  
One crimson shaft of dawn sank thro' my room.



## SEMIAHMOO SPIT



ONE long, low, narrow strip of glistening  
sands

Flung out into the Georgian Gulf; one  
wide,

Blue sweep of sunlit waves on every side.  
Around it reach the hills, like emerald bands,  
And farther, higher, more majestic, stands  
Mount Baker, chaste and white — the ocean's bride.  
With noiseless feet the pearl-topped waters glide,  
Pushing each other up the black tide-lands;  
Here wild, sweet roses, like an amethyst cloud,  
Make pink the air and scent the languorous breeze  
That wantons over these far western seas;  
And when the sun drops downward, flaming, proud,  
This stretch of water, petaled fold on fold,  
Seems one great crimson poppy, fleck'd with gold.

## THE HOLY DAWN



GOD, the Dawn is coming up the East!  
White as a virgin waking from a dream  
Or a chaste lily on a crystal stream;  
Sweet as the June air when the rain has  
ceased,

Sweet as a love that has been hoped for least;  
Dear as the thought of kisses that are gone,  
Pure as a cloistered nun — dear God, the Dawn —  
The holy Dawn — is coming up the East!  
Now every vein, run full with sacred fire,  
And heart, beat fast and thrill with ecstasy;  
And soul, leap up in exquisite desire,  
And throb with passion, every pulse of me! . . .  
Peace to each man, O Christ, and each dumb beast,  
The holy Dawn is coming up the East!

## WHAT DOST THOU SEE, O NIGHT?

**W**HAT dost thou see with thy clear eyes, O  
Night?

How many sinful ones upon this earth  
Who curse the very hour that gave them  
birth;

How many who, with passionate lips and white,  
Kneel, praying for the old dear, lost delight;

How many lonely breasts sob low and deep;

How many, sleeping, dream, and dreaming, weep—

How many, sleepless, count the slow hours' flight,  
And long for the first yellow flush of dawn?

How many look through cruel prison bars

At the wide purple air and silver stars?

How many souls, since thou last watched, have gone  
Into some other where— all rest and light? . . .

What dost thou see with thy clear eyes, O Night?

## STORM



THE rain was blown in blinding sheets, the  
swept  
The rattling windows and the quakin  
door.

Up the rock cliffs along the rugged shore  
The ocean waves, like hungry wild beasts, leapt,  
And fell, and leapt again, and fell, — then crept  
Back, conquered, sobbing, down the tide's black  
floor.

The gusts of wind swelled to a strong, hoarse roar  
Or shrieked about the lonely caves — and kept  
A weird tune shrilling in the chimney's throat.  
So raged the storm . . . till night wore into day,  
Bringing a peaceful glow to East and West ;  
A wide, calm sea ; a lull ; a bird's glad note,  
And spent winds resting. . . . So, dear God, I pray  
After life's feverish passions — rest, sweet rest !

## A DREAM OF CLEOPATRA

**L**AST night I slept beside the languorous Nile,  
And saw swart Cleopatra, proud and  
large,  
Drift slowly past me in her sumptuous  
barge.

Her crimson lips curved in a wanton smile,  
Half-closed, her eyes flamed tenderness, the while  
She dreamed of Antony. Her round, bare arms  
Were clasped with jewels and Egyptian charms;  
And her dark maids — the slow hours to beguile —  
Perfumed her brow, and wove her glorious hair  
In serpent coils. Pink lotus blossoms slept  
On her warm breast; unevenly her breath  
Came, fragrant, from her parted lips, — and ne'er  
Throbb'd throat so sweet. . . . *And all unnoticed*  
*crept*  
*Beside her, waiting, the dark reptile Death.*

## AFTER DEATH



**S** this the couch where she lay yesternight  
With awed, majestic face and fleeting  
breath  
And great sweet eyes that would not  
shrink from Death?

Is this the pillow, soft with down and white,  
On which her dear cheek lay, turned from the light,  
While all about her, bright and golden-fair,  
Sank the rich tangles of her silken hair?  
Ah, God — if but for one brief time I might  
Again press trembling lips upon her cheek . . .  
Her slim white throat . . . her whiter brow . . .  
her hair . . .

Her tender eyes wherein the love-light shone!  
But once — but once — to hear those sweet lips speak!  
I should be glad that she is free from care —  
But oh, this first and awful night alone!

## “BEING SO BEREFT”

**W**HAT shall I do — now being so bereft  
I may no longer look on any day  
And “He will come this evening”  
fondly say?

How shall I, having now no pleasure left —  
Of all the pleasures that of old were mine,  
How shall I gather up the hours and lay  
Them, each on each, all patiently away —  
And have the strength to plain not nor repine? ·  
How shall I nightly — by what artifice —  
Win the sweet Lady of Poppies for my guest?  
With what long pleadings buy the brief, brief bliss  
Of holding her, reluctant, to my breast?  
With what seductions may I lure her kiss —  
Her blessed kiss of respite and of rest?

## IN A VALLEY OF PEACE



**P**HIS long, green valley sloping to the sun,  
With dimpling, silver waters loitering  
through;  
The sky that bends above me, mild and  
blue;

The wide, still wheat-fields, yellowing one by one,  
And all the peaceful sounds when day is done —

I cannot bear their calm monotony!

Great God! I want the thunder of the sea!

I want to feel the wild red lightnings run

Around, about me; hear the bellowing surf,

And breathe the tempest's sibilant, sobbing breath;

To front the elements, defying death,

And fling myself prone on the spray-beat turf,

And hear the strong waves trampling wind and rain,

Like herds of beasts upon the mighty plain.



## THE STATUE



THAT I might chisel a statue, line on line,  
Out of a marble's chaste severities!

Angular, harsh; no softened curves to  
please;

Set tears within the eyes to make them shine,  
And furrows on the brow, deep, stern, yet fine;

Gaunt, awkward, tall; no courtier of ease;

The trousers bulging at the bony knees;

Long nose, large mouth. . . . But ah, the light  
divine

Of Truth,— the light that set a people free! —

Burning upon it in a steady flame,

As sunset fires a white peak on the sky. . . .

Ah, God! To leave it nameless and yet see

Men looking weep and bow themselves and cry —

“Enough, enough! We know thy statue's name!”

## FEBRUARY NIGHT

**B**ELLOW, the sea lies blue and cold as steel,  
And smooth as satin stretched from shore  
to shore,  
Save where a shimmering fish leaps; or  
an oar

Reeking with crimson rises; or the keel  
Of some ship lets a rough path backward reel;  
The sun — a flaming thing — sinks low and lower  
And beats upon the West's unclosing door;  
The shadows downward creep and reach to feel,  
With long black fingers, if the day be dead;  
Above, the sky glows like a pearl alight  
With a rose-diamond's shifting gold and red;  
And o'er the eastern mountains, soft and white,  
The moon steps, trembling, from her silver bed —  
A virgin bride — to meet the lips of night.

## NIGHT



NIGHT — O cool and grateful summer

Night!

After the fierce heat of the afternoon,

After the burning hours of languorous

June,

After the sun draws seaward, brazen, bright —

How welcome is thy coming, Night, sweet Night!

Low in the blue, blue East vibrates the moon,

Mellow and large; across the shimmering dune,

The wind swells in and shakes the wheat-fields, white

With early moonbeams; the faint ripples pass

Lightly above the silver-bladed grass

Whence all the bees have taken drowsy flight. . . .

Thou soothest passionate pain from many a breast

And grantest hours of unremembering rest

To tortured hearts — thou dear, God-given Night!

## EBB-TIDE



ONE the old rapture and the old delight;  
Gone the still ecstasy that thrilled like  
fire  
Along my veins, heart-lit with chaste  
desire;  
Gone even the dream that thro' the longest night  
Shone like a beacon's soft, recurrent light;  
Lip-touch and hand-clasp; dear and broken speech,  
Heart-question and heart-answer, each on each—  
All the old rapture, all the old delight!  
Gone all life's music — yea, forevermore!  
Yet strong to bear I bow myself and hear  
Its echoes borne up bitter years to me. . . .  
As some sea-lover on a barren shore  
Hears far across the waste of tide-lands drear  
The lingering recession of the sea.

## IN ABSENCE

**H**EART of my heart! Time was when  
moments went  
As petals cast upon a rushing stream,  
So swift, so sweet, I could but catch their  
gleam

Ere gone were all their beauty and their scent —  
With the slow-ebbing sea of ages blent.

Then thou wert with me! Now, alas, they seem  
Long as the long-drawn torment of a dream —  
Long as the endless way to sweet Content.

Yon sea that murmurs — is it blue or gray?

Yon moon that rises — is it dull or bright?  
How shall I live to meet another day,

How, having met it, live on to the night —  
When all my soul aches that thou art away,  
And all my being for love's lost delight?



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